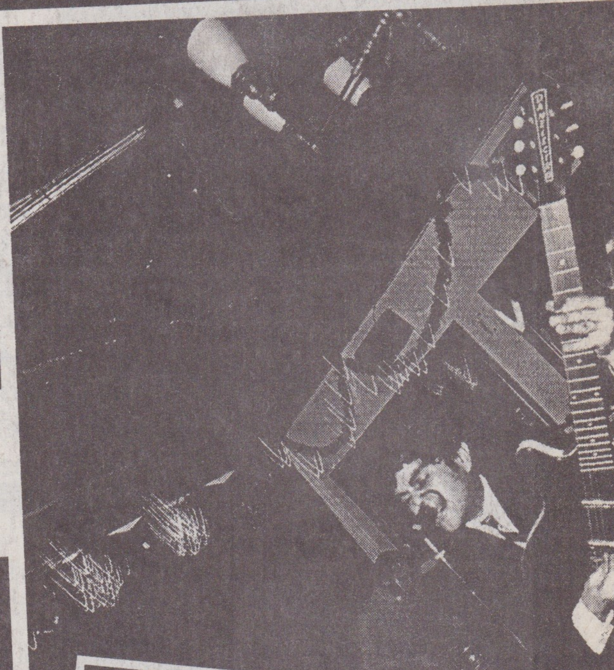
MAXIMUM ROCKNROLL

#251 • APRIL 2004 • $4



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MAXIMUMROCKNROLL TOP 10

For what it's worth (not much), here's some of the MRR crew's current Top 10 (or so...) lists of stuff we review.

TIM BROOKS

NO HOPE FOR THE KIDS-Das Reich-45
CROPKNOX-Rot & Roll-CD
MANDARINES-EP / WHITE FLAG-LP
FUCKED UP-Dance of Death-EP
DISKORDS-Blame it on the Kids-LP
HENRY FIAT'S OPEN SORE-Parallel-LP
SPITS-LP / RATTUS-LP / UNKIND-EP
HARUM SCARUM-Last Light-LP
V/A-England Belongs to Me-3xLP
BROKEN BOTTLES-In the Bottles-LP

ROB COONS

FUCKED UP-Dance of Death-EP
FUNERAL SHOCK-Dead Scene$ter-EP
NO HOPE FOR THE KIDS-Das Reich-45
DISKORDS-Blame it on the Kids-LP & EP
SPITS-Witchhunt-LP
EVAPORATORS / STREET TRASH-live
HENRY FIAT'S OPEN SORE-Parallel-LP
PHANTOM LIMBS / VANISHING-split EP
KYLESA-No Ending-EP & live
MDC-Millions of Dead Cops-LP

ARWEN CURRY

SMALLTOWN / DOWN & AWAY-split EP
NO HOPE FOR THE KIDS-Das Reich-45
SPITS-Witchhunt-LP
HARUM SCARUM-Last Light-LP
LEBENDEN TOTEN-live
A FRAMES-Crutches-EP
PHANTOM LIMBS / VANISHING-split EP
YE OLDE BUTTFUCK-EPs
FUCKED UP-Dance of Death-EP
HOW WE LOST THE WAR-Beacon-EP

PAUL CURRAN

tearing it up down under

JONATHAN FLOYD

DISKORDS-Blame it on the Kids-LP & EP
VON ZIPPERS-Crime is Now-LP
SPITS-Witchhunt-LP
HENRY FIAT'S OPEN SORE-Parallel-LP
PONYS-Laced With Romance-LP
PAINTBOX-Cry of the Sheeps-EP
SHEMPS / ORPHANS-live
A FRAMES-Crutches-EP
RANDY-live
NO HOPE FOR THE KIDS-Das Reich-45

JEFF HEERMANN

SPITS-Witchhunt-LP
SKOCK-This Generation's on Vacation-LP
TRANSISTOR TRANSISTOR-12"
HENRY FIAT'S OPEN SORE-Parallel-LP
FATALS-Angry-EP
FUNERAL SHOCK-Dead Scene$ter-EP
AMAZING SPIDER MEN-Boom Boom-EP
DISKORDS-Pink Palace-EP
2 THOUSAND MANIACS-State College-EP
KIDNAPPERS-Spanish Girls-EP

KENNY KAOS

DISASTERS-Smile Till You Die-EP
ACCIDENTS-Dannelly Field Airport-EP
SLOWMOTIONS-Make Love-45
FATALS-Angry-EP
KIDNAPPERS-Spanish Girls-EP
FLAKES-Talk About You-45
DISKORDS-Pink Palace-EP
MUDDY FRANKENSTEIN-Shakedown-45
REALTORS-Guilt By Association-LP
LUBRICANTS-Activated Energy-LP

CAROLYN KEDDY

FATALS-Angry-EP
THEE FLYING DUTCHMEN-Angry-EP
PONYS-LP & 45 / A FRAMES-Crutches-EP
WALTER DANIELS & WADE DRIVER-EP
FLAKES-Talk About You-45
STRONG COME ONS-Yell A Lot-EP
TEENAGE KICKS: THE UNDERTONES-DVD
HENRY FIAT'S OPEN SORE-Parallel-LP
ROYAL ROUTES-Moving Up-45
CAPTAIN 9's-If This is Heaven-45

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BACK ISSUES AVAILABLE:
#148, 150-151, 153-154, 156 pts. 1 & 2, 159-163, 166, 168-172, 174-175, 178-181, 184-210, 213-227, 229-250 are as stated above in subscription info.
See page after next.

DEADLINES FOR NEXT ISSUE:
Scene Reports: continuously, with photos!
Interviews: continuously, with photos!
Ad Reservations: call to make sure.

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MAXIMUMROCKNROLL

TOP 10

Please send us records (2 copies of vinyl, if possible–one for MRR and one for reviewer), or CD-only release. See records section for where to send tapes & CD-Rs.

RAY LUJAN

- SKIMMER-Still-CD / ONE REASON-CD
- SAVING GRACE-Holiday Cruise-CD
- SMALLTOWN / DOWN & AWAY-split EP
- HARRIS-New Morning-CD / RANDY-live
- PONYS-LP / OVER IT-live
- SMALL HOURS-LP / STRAIGHTJACKET-EP
- EMPIRE-Expensive Sound-CD
- NEW BLACK-CD / PLASTIC JESUS-CD
- PURPLE HEARTS-LP / KIDNAPPERS-EP
- HENRY FIAT'S OPEN SORE-Parallel-LP

BOBBY MANIC

- MINDS-Plastic Girls-LP
- KIDNAPPERS-Spanish Girls-EP
- BOSS MARTIANS-The Set-Up-LP
- CAPTAIN 9's-If This is Heaven-45
- SOME ACTION-EP / SPITS-LP

WILL RISK

- SOOPHIE NUN SQUAD-Pasizzle Slizzles-LP
- DESCENDENTS-'Merican-EP
- FUCKED UP-Dance of Death-EP
- DISKORDS-Blame it on the Kids-LP
- PONYS-Laced With Romance-LP

ALLAN MCNAUGHTON

- HENRY FIAT'S OPEN SORE-Parallel-LP
- DISKORDS-Blame it on the Kids-LP
- PAINTBOX-Cry of the Sheeps-EP
- SMALLTOWN / DOWN & AWAY-split EP
- WRANGLER BRUTES-45 / C.D.S.-EP
- TYCKER DÜ?-5" / SHIVERING-EP
- BULLET UNION-EP / FUNERAL SHOCK-EP
- MEASLES, MUMPS, RUBELLA-EP
- HOW WE LOST THE WAR-Beacon-EP
- FUCKED UP-Dance of Death-EP

DONNA POOLE

- DISKORDS-Blame it on the Kids-LP
- DISKORDS-Pink Palace-EP
- HARUM SCARUM-Last Light-LP
- SPITS-Witchhunt-LP
- FATALS-Angry-EP
- FLAKES-Talk About You-45
- THEE MINKS-Songs About Boys-EP
- A FRAMES-Crutches-EP
- YE OLDE BUTTFUCK-Burden-EP
- CAPTAIN 9's-If This is Heaven-45

BRUCE ROEHRS

- HAMMERLOCK-live
- BANNER OF THUGS-First Feat of Arms-LP
- FUCKED UP-Dance of Death-EP
- BERLINER WEISSE-Alptraum-LP
- SOIFASS-Es Ist Zeit-LP
- CROPKNOX-Rot & Roll-CD
- ORPHANS-live / RATTUS-LP
- 2 THOUSAND MANIACS-State College-EP
- BROKEN BOTTLES-In the Bottles-LP
- V/A-Move to Riot-2xLP

MIKE THORN

- V/A-Move to Riot-2xLP
- FUCKED UP-EP / HIRNSÄULE-LP
- CROPKNOX-CD / DEADFALL-live
- YE OLDE BUTTFUCK-EPs
- HARUM SCARUM-LP / LEBENDEN TOTEN-live
- DISKORDS-LP & EP / HELLSHOCK-EP
- HENRY FIAT'S OPEN SORE-Parallel-LP
- NO HOPE FOR THE KIDS-Das Reich-45
- FUNERAL SHOCK-Dead Scene$ter-EP
- PAINTBOX-Cry of the Sheeps-EP

RYAN WELLS

- PHOGO-God God-EP
- V/A-Move to Riot-LP
- DISKORDS-Blame it on the Kids-LP
- THEE FLYING DUTCHMEN-Angry-EP
- THE PUNKS-LP
- KEEN MONKEY WORK-Slow Pork-CD
- A FRAMES-Crutches-EP
- CAPTAIN 9's-If This is Heaven-45
- FATALS-Angry-EP
- FLAKES-Talk About You-45

ZINE TOP TEN

- WARNING
- BRAINSCAN #20
- CHAINBREAKER #3
- COMMUNICATING VESSELS
- DREAM WHIP #13
- GHOST PINE #7
- GREENZINE #13
- IT'S ALL GRAVY #5
- MAKE ME NUMB #14
- PAPING #9

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#148/Sept '95. Soda Jerks, Toe Rag, Thorazine, Sacred Straight, Wizo, Opposition Party, Moody Jackson, Adversives, Opcion Crucial, Rebel, Rebel, Teen Idols, Walking Ruins.

#150/Nov '95. NY Loose, Snap-Her, Sick Boys, Splatterheads, Pipe, Pregnant Man, Final Conflict, Rawness, Stink, Goblins, Smellie Fingers.

#151/Dec '95. Lowdowns, My White Bread Mom, Queen B's, Electric Frankenstein, Turtlehead, Serpico, Trick Babys, In/Humanity, Stains, Varukers, Pist, Terrible Virtue.

#153/Feb '96. Snort, Hatchetface, Little Ugly Girls, ADZ, Oxymoron, NOTA, Stun Guns, Surfin' Turnips, Gutfiddle, Karen Monster, Dimestore Haloes.

#154/Mar '96. Motards, Subincision, Stisism, Donnas, Stallions, Count Backwards.

#156 pt 1/May '96. Public Toys, Crunch, Peter & The Test Tube Babies, Nails Of Hawaiian, Splash 4, Yawp!, Lifetime, Sickoids.

#156 pt 2/May '96. Australian Special: Beanflipper, Melancholy, Blitz Babiez, Crank, SubRosa, Mindsnare, TMT, H-Block, B-Sides, Fallout, Frenzal Rhomb, Lawnsmell, One Inch Punch, Chickenshit, No Deal.

#159/Aug '96. Smugglers, Tone Deaf Pig-Dogs, Too Many Records, Man Afraid, Blind Side, Vox Populi, Fun People, Fat, Drunk & Stupid, BrandNewUnit, Death Wish Kids.

#160/Sept '96. Automatics, Boycot, Toast, Morning Shakes, Mormons, John Q. Public, Sex Offenders, Ballgagger, Business, Apocalypse Babys, Good Riddance.

#161/Oct '96. Jet Bumpers, Steel Miners, Divisia, Lopo Drido, Red #9, Nothing Cool, Sink, Sires, Newtown Grunts.

#162/Nov '96. Phantom Surfers, Candy Snatchers, the Stain, National Guard, Torches To Rome, Restos Fosiles, Two Bo's Maniacs, Snuka, Redemtion 87, Torture Kitty.

#163/Dec '96. Last Sons of Krypton, Prostitutes, Wig Hat, Boys, Let It Rock, Enemy Soil, Vulcaneers, Half Empty, Zeros, Deadcats, Teen Idles.

#166/Mar '97. Walking Abortions, Hickey, '77 Spreads, Sanity Assassins, Cards In Spokes, Joey Tampon & The Toxic Shocks, Adjective Noun, Suicide King, Lenguas Armadas, Trauma, De Crew.

#168/May '97. Cretin 66, Fishsticks, Distemper, Enewetak, UK Subs, Luxo Champ, Jake Sayless, "Pioneers of Punk."

#169/June '97. Hand Skin, Cluster Bomb Unit, Jihad, Purgen, Speed Queens, Remission, Halflings, The Old Man, Deface.

#170/July '97. Bristle, Mine, Tedio Boys, The 4 Cockroaches, Absconded, Meanwhile, Broken, (Young) Pioneers, Hoodrat.

#171/Aug '97. Violent Society, Strychnine, Idiots, Knuckle Heads, Race Traitor, Patrick Grindstaff, Misanthropists.

#172/Sept '97. Withdrawals, Judgement, No Motiv, Oppressed Logic, Truents, Left For Dead, Yellowskin, Weird Lovemakers, Smash Your Face, Flatus, Straight Faced, Klaxon, X-It.

#174/Nov '97. Stratford Mercenaries, Lickity Split, Bladder, Piss Shivers, Barnhills, In/Humanity, Education theme issue.

#175/Dec '97. One Man Army, Those Unknown, Boiling Man, Piao Chong, Exploding Crustaceans, Last Year's Youth, Heartdrops, Dirty Burds, Dimestore Haloes.

#178/Mar '98. Economics issue. Forgotten Rebels, Dirtys, Josh Collins, American Steel, Letterbombs, Gyogun Rend's, Go-Devils, Room 41, Tone Deaf Pig Dogs, Garage Rats.

#179/April '98. Boy Sets Fire, Tres Kids, Idyls, Spat & The Guttersnipes, The Posers, Explosive Kate, Douche Flag.

#180/May '98. Reinforce, Discontent, TV Killers, Slack Action, Eyeliners, Mademoiselle, MK Ultraviolence, Haulin' Ass, 97a, Infiltrators, Jack Saints, Stray Bullets.

#181/June '98. Grapefruit, Druggies, DDI, Bonecrusher, Normals, All Bets Off, Stiletto Boys, Summerjack, Cell Block 5.

#184/Sept '98. Absentees, Devoid of Faith, UXA, Ümlaut, Four Letter Word, Streetwalkin' Cheetahs, Ricanstruction, Libertine, Indecision, Snarkout Boys.

#185/Oct '98. Traitors, Wimpy Dicks, Armed & Hammered, Dylan McKays, NME, Tezacrifco, Worm, Roswells, Raxola, Beatnik Termites.

#186/Nov '98. Registrators, August Spies, Marilyn's Vitamins, Chinese Love Beads.

#187/Dec '98. Real Kids, Sawn Off, Cretins, Spider Cunts, Heroines, Third Party, No Class, Skabs.

#188/Jan '99. Stitches, Neighbors, Mansfields, Real Swinger, Marauders, Mark Bruback, Mars Moles, DOA.

#189/Feb '99. Monster X, Peter & the Test Tube Babies, Steam Pig, Maurauders, Yakuza, Dead Beat, Halfways, Hot Rod Honeys, DeRita Sisters.

#190/Mar '99. John Holstrom, Powerhouse, Brezhnev, Slappy, Black Pumpkin, Smartbomb ca, Wanda Chrome, Long Gones, Smogtown, Halfways, Tilt.

#191/April '99. Murder Suicide Pact, Kil Kare, Dudman, Super Hi-Fives, Better Than Elvis DJs, Pet Peeves, Loose Ends, Slingshot Episode.

#192/May '99. Los Crudos, Burning Kitchen, Henry Fiat's Open Sore, Polythene, Kangaroo Recs.

#193/June '99. Munster Recs, DS-13, Safety Pins, Pussycats, Piolines, False Alarm, Darlington, Bad Stain, Bodies, Houseboy, Mullets.

#194/July '99. Deathreat, Last Match, God Hates Computers, Fokkewolf, Flesh Eating Creeps, Aside, Hoppin' Mad, Kid Dynamite, Thee Outcasts.

#195/Aug '99. Moral Crux, RC5, Have Nots, Ill Tempered, Dysentery, Greg Higgins, Revlons, Larry & the Gonowheres..

#196/Sept '99. Hopscotch, Catharsis, Orchid, The Pricks, Grissle, Product X, Reaching Forward, Emerge, Third Degree, "Epicenter Zone '90-'99".

#197/Oct '99. Reducers SF, Lower Class Brats, Reactor 7, TheGodsHateKansas, Futuro Incierto, Showcase Showdown, Waifle, Flat Earth Recs.

#198/Nov '99. Hail Mary, Pressure Point, Bump 'N Uglies, The Victims, A//Political, Outlast

#199/Dec '99. Locust, Ratos de Porao, USV, Razlog Za, G-3, Swarm, WHN?, Mt. St. Helens, Black Cat Music, Enemy Soil.

#200/Jan '00. American Steel, Curse, Gee Vaucher, Hers Never Existed, Aaron Cometbus, Active distro, Toxic Narcotic, MRR catalogue #100-200.

#201/Feb '00. Beerzone, Towards An End, Daybreak, "Best Punk Singles of the '90s," the WTO riots in Seattle.

#202/March '00. KTMWQ, Real Estate Fraud, Strike Out, Broken Rekids, the Haggard, GC5, Gore Gore Girls, the Catheters.

#203/April '00. Spazz, Slang, *Slug & Lettuce* zine, *Suburban Voice* zine, As We Once Were, Red Angel Dragnet, Four Letter Words, Slampt Records, the Wednesdays, the Fuses.

#204/May '00. Cocksparrer, Talk Is Poison, Red Scare, Put Downs, Out Cold, Geraldine, Michael Knight, CBGaV, Pillage People.

#205/June '00. Punks With Kids special. Skudz, 50 Million, Legion, Wilbur Cobb, Coalition.

#206/July '00. Drunk, ESL, Ambition Mission, Lord High Fixers, Cripple Bastards, Dig Dug, Federation X, Amulet, Valentine Killers.

#207/Aug '00. Harum Scarum, Raw Power, Unseen, Pekinska Patka, Hudson Falcons, Dementia 13, Confine, Allergic to Whores.

#208/Sept '00. Le Shok, the Commies, the Chemo Kids, Day of Mourning, Affront, Diaspora, Whippersnapper, Hopeless/Sub City, Prank, Countdown to Oblivion

#209/Oct '00. Loose Lips, Godstomper, Peace of Mind, FYP, I Farm, Annalise, Cattle Decapitation, Riot/Clone.

#210/Nov '00. J Church, Profane Existence, Pezz, Pre-Teens, Templars, This Machine Kills, Subtonix, OB.

#213/Feb '01. Fun People, Onward to Mayhem, Ugly Pop, Midnight Evils, Atrocious Madness, Bread & Water, Josh Peach, Zodiac Killers.

#214/Mar '01. Crispus Attucks, Fetish, Lifes Halt, Mr. Roboto, Dream Dates, Satan McNugget, Havoc, Briefs.

#215/April '01. No Means No, Vitamin X, Injections, Y, Dils, Last In Line, Don Austin, Deranged Records

#216/May '01. Propagandhi, Angelic Upstarts, Discordance Axis, Ruination, Photographer: Chris Boarts, Strap-Ons, Lynnards Innards

#217/June '01. Joey Ramone R.I.P., Tear It Up, Skitsystem, The Pattern, CrimethInc., Esperanza, The Chicago Blackout, Photographer: Ace

#218/July '01. Guyana Punchline, Les Sexareenos, The Devil Is Electric, Red Monkey, White Collar Crime, Forca Macabra, The Ataris, Suicide, The Mob

#219/Aug '01. "Fix It!" cycling article, Crucial Unit, Lost Sounds, Lombardies, Flowers in the Dustbin pt. 1, Casualties, Resinators, *P.U.N.K.*, Slaughter & the Dogs, Anti-Flag, Dontcares, S'Bitch.

#220/Sep '01. Latin American Issue. Aubuso Sonoro, Anti-Todo, Fuerza X, Apatia No, Manganzoids, Demencia, Sick Terror, Tocatta y Bulla, NTN, Argies, Reconcile, Anti-Korpus, Ruido De Odio, Los Pepiniyos, Rebelion Disidente, Brazil Scum, Kim Bae Photo Essay.

#221/Oct '01. Tales from the G8 Summit, Reflections, Soophie Nun Squad, Totalitär, True North, Wontons, Sin Dios, Bottles & Skulls, Scarred For Life, Flowers in the Dustbin pt. 2, Remains of the Day, Ritchie Whites, B'67.

#222/Nov '01. Dios Hastio, Tragedy, Four Letter Word, *Salad Days* author Charles Romalotti, Very Metal, Maurice's Little Bastards, the Rotters, MDC Brazilian tour diary, the Cravats, JR Ewing, Dutch scene report, extended news section, "Globalization Rhetoric & Reality,"

#223/Dec '01. "US Policy in the Middle East," "Revisiting 1948," Manifesto Jukebox, Good Riddance, Pokers, Viimenen Kolonna, Bluebloods, Vitamin X tour diary, Flakes, Pg. 99, the Mob, 7 Days of Samsara.

#224/Jan '02. "Legislation Since Sept. 11," Rendencion 9.11, Metro Youth, Severed Head of State, Piranhas, Paraf, Backstabbers, Inc, An Albatross, Citizen Fish Tour, SPAM Records, the Virus, Action Time.

#225/Feb '02. Lengua Armada, Breaker Breaker, 3 Yrs. Down, Scrotum Grinder, Turun Tauti, Flux Of Pink Indians, Holding On, Pauki, 86'd, See You In Hell, Red Light Sting, Nazis From Mars, Scare Tactic.

#226/Mar '02. Queer punk special issue. Vaseline, Quails, Skinjobs, Italian queer punk report, Vaginal Davis, Feelings on a Grid, Sissies, Scott Free, Dumba, Columns.

#227/Apr '02. Bellrays, Rhinos, Wasted, Kristofer Pasanen, Business, Assert, DS 13 tour report, Life Set Struggle, Iowaska, Zounds.

#229/June '02. Countdown To Putsch, The Awakening, Dave Hill Distribution, Holier Than Thou, Kill Devil Hills, Sound Of Failure, E.T.A., Nubs, Les Baton Rouge, New Disorder Records, Career Suicide, Swellbellys, The Sinyx.

#230/July '02. Bitchin', Redencion 911, Phantom Limbs, Secretions, Holy Molar, Sharp Knife, Mighty John Waynes, A Global Threat, Groovie Ghoulies, Reproach, Annie Anxiety.

#231/Aug '02. Epoxies, Puppy Vs. Dyslexia, Koro, Blocko, Amdi Petersen's Armé, Piss & Vinegar Zine, Schizophrenic Records, Toys That Kill, Give Us Barabbas, Dirt.

#232/Sept '02. "No Future" article, Lost, Fartz, Sell Outs, Razors Edge, Stakeout, Dillinger Four, All or Nothing HC, Fleshies, Bridge Nine Records, Akashic Books, Liberty.

#233/Oct '02. "All Ages" article, Scholastic Deth, Runnamucks, Sinners & Saints, Panic, Gasolheads, Jewws, Futures, Michael Landon's Commandos, Storm the Tower, Against Me!, Balance of Terror, Class Assassins, Spazm 151.

#234/Nov '02. Snobs, What Happens Next? Brazilian tour, The Oath, Radio 4, Feederz, Charm City Suicides, Selfish, Riot 99, End On End, Peawees, Born/Dead.

#235/Dec '02. Anti-war Special Issue. Anti-war guest columns. Anti-war scene reports. Articles: "Reading for Democracy," "War on Iraq?" "Unfinished American Revolution," Resource Guide, "US Involvement in Iraq,""Axis of Empire." Long Island DIY Scene, What Happens Next? Brazilian tour part 2, Smalltown, Kylesa, Crash & Burn.

#236/Jan '03. Mr. California & State Police, Iron Lung, Riff Randells, Chainsaw, *Artcore*, Latterman, Travis Cut, Phenomenauts, Pretty Little Flower, X-Cretas.

#237/Feb '03. Top Ten Records of 2002, "Music as a Weapon: Artists in Wartime," Dirt Bike Annie, Let It Burn, Stockyard Stoics, King Khan & Shrines, 625 Records, Feast Or Famine, Rudimentary Peni, Coachwhips, Self Defense.

#238/Mar '03. World Burns To Death, Chronics, Vilently Ill, Dystopia, Pilger, Exotic Fever, Brezhnev, R.A.M.B.O., Blown To Bits, Put To Shame, Deconditioned, This Bike Is A Pipe Bomb, Monsters.

#239/Apr '03. Romanian D-beat, Meconium Records, Amazombies, Abandoned Hearts Club, Mike V. & the Rats, Nicki Sicki, Bigamists, Bolivia article, Negatives, Kuolema, Defiance.

#240/May '03. I Quit, Apers, Headless Horsemen, Lesser of Two, Barse, Nightmare, Music Zine Roundtable, Exploding Hearts, Flesh Packs, Blacklist Brigade.

#241/June '03. Tyrades, Lumbergh, The Stand By Me, New Mexican Disaster Squad, Cut the Shit, Libertinagem, 17th Class, the Ends, He Who Corrupts, Deathbag, Cria Cuervos.

#242/July '03. Pensacola and San Francisco punk protest reports, John Wilkes Booze, Anfo, Bob Suren, Migra Violenta, Jackson 8, *Snakepit* zine, Krigshot, the Rites, Deadfall.

#243/Aug '03. "Media Alliance and the FCC," Striking Distance, Malcontents, Invisible City, Books Lie, Charm City Art Space, Hopeless Dregs of Humanity, I Shot Cyrus, Sunday Morning Einsteins, What the Kids Want, Onion Flavored Rings.

#244/Sept '03. None More Black, Deadline, Rai Ko Ris, Boxed In, Exploding Hearts, Raving Mojos, Blackout Terror, Morticia's Lovers, Thee Fine Lines, *Trust* zine.

#245/Oct '03. No Time Left, Riistetyt, Intense Youth, The Gimmies, Ass End Offend, Artimus Pyle, La Fraction, Kung Fu Rick, The Horror.

#246/Nov '03. Punk & Resistance in Israel, Letters from Palestine, No Choice, FM Knives, Bury the Living, Marked Men, The Dirty Burds, Provoked.

#247/Dec '03. DSB, The Boils, Popular Shapes, Phoenix Foundation, Bathtub Shitter, Meet the Virus, Cropknox, "Punk Babies on Tour" Article.

#248/Jan '04. Discharge, Superhelicopter, Jed Whitey, Black Friday '29, Find Him And Kill Him, The Lids, Impratical Cockpit, Face Up To It, History Of Maximum Rocknroll Radio.

#249/Feb '04. From Ashes Rise, Hagar the Womb, This Is My Fist, Skip Jensen, Gride, Katy Otto/Mike Taylor Dialogue, John Yates, Pointing Finger.

#250/Mar '04. Best Records of 2003, Miami FTAA protests, Clorox Girls, FIYA, "La Villita: Chicago Pilsen Scene," Terminus Victor, Restarts, Damage Done, Knights of New Crusade.

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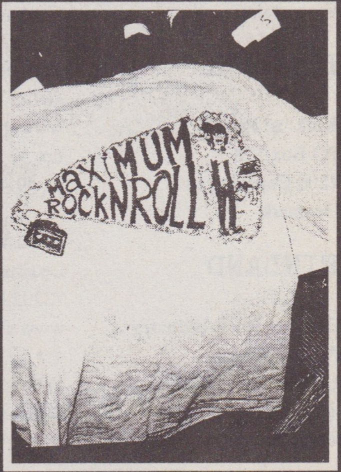

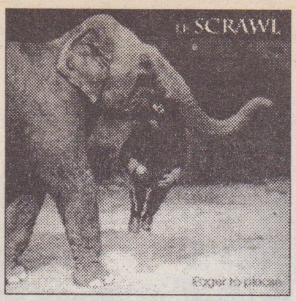

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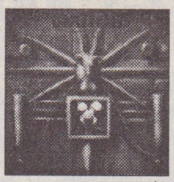

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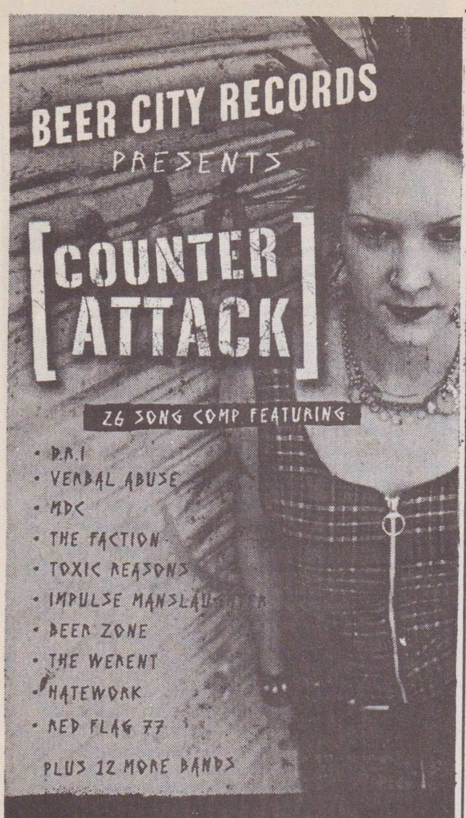

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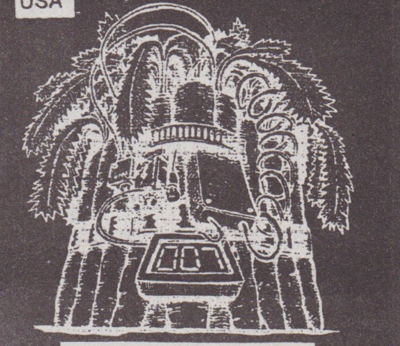

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LETTERS

Send letters to MRR, PO Box 460760, San Francisco, CA 94146-0760, or to mrr@maximumrocknroll.com. No response guaranteed.

Dear *MRR*—

Hello & Cheers. I am writing this in response to Lefty Hooligan's article in the #249 issue of *MRR*. I enjoyed his article greatly. However, I found some of his philosophical views arguable. To quote him: "The absurd New Age mantra that we create our own reality is merely an extension of a very American notion that we are the captains of our own destiny and therefore are responsible for our own personal living conditions."

First off, anyone who knows anything about philosophy would understand that the belief that we are the creators of our own realities is nothing "New Age" or American. For example, the French philosopher Jean Paul Sartre (The Father of Existentialism) wrote extensively on such subjects many years ago. And needless to say, there were many before him. I myself believe that through a myriad of choices and actions that we create the reality we exist in. The energies that exude through our daily actions are countered by a response from the other energies around us. One reason why it may be important to think before we act.

Through "choice," whether it be subconscious or not, we demand certain replies and actions out of our surroundings which leaves us to deal with what it is our actions have created—reality. To be honest it seems more of a "New Age" American mantra to focus our lives disparities on objects other than ourselves. Ridding us of the all so troublesome problem of taking responsibility for our actions or simply where we are in life.

There was a point in my life, growing up poor, when I would blame many of my problems on the faulty and corrupt government. However, I was soon to realize that it was simply my "choice" whether or not I was to remain poor and uneducated. Poverty... I've grown to cherish it along with the choice to educate myself. Through my actions I have created what for me is reality. The weak "I, me, mine" generations can fuck off!

Any correspondence is welcome.

Left Back Zine/Chadd Beverlin #424-439
PO Box 1812 Marion, OH 4330 1

So it's your choice to be in prison, right?—"Lefty" Hooligan

MRR—

Thought maybe you could print something about Ron Apple our dear friend and band mate passing away on January 10th, 2004, at 4am. RIP—Ron Apple, lead guitarist of The Eddie Haskells

Eulogy:

I will miss Ron. I was the person who Ron met first in the band. I posted a guitar wanted ad on the Internet. Something along the lines of, looking for someone who is creative and who can play like Steve Jones, Johnny Thunders, Chuck Berry, who were all of Ron's Favorite players. We met a couple days after he replied to my post, I heard him play and thought, "this guy is a great guitar player, and he's in." I told him we weren't only looking for a guitar player but also a friend. He told me he understood.

We recorded together, toured the west coast within two months of him joining the band. Ron was a very talented guitar player, fast learner, and an intelligent, great person to know. His guitar playing gave us the step up we needed, he made us sound amazing. I saw him as an idol; he was a fucking brilliant guitar player. After recording with Ron and releasing our five song EP, we were offered to release a full length on Super Speedway Records, and they were supposed to pay in full for the album and would fund the band to tour the U.S. We still had many more experiences to share with Ron, and this is what hurts me the most. Thinking he is not going to be there to share what was started.

I only knew Ron for one year, but in that one year I met the most amazing person, and I'm glad I met him and was able to share with him what it is was like to do something you loved together, which was playing in a band and rocking out for people. He had the spirit of a rock n roll guitar player, and he did what he loved which was to express himself through his guitar. He was amazing; he will be missed, loved by me and many others who loved him through his guitar and those who knew him as a close friend.

Rich Mejia / Filthy Rich
www.eddiehaskells.org

MRR—

I was very disappointed reading the From Ashes Rise interview and finding out what a bunch of sellouts they've become. Did anyone else notice that all the arguments they used to defend their position were the same ones used by sellouts of the past such as the Casualties and Nirvana? Also, since we shouldn't criticize people until we've been in their shoes (according to From Ashes Rise), I guess we should all shut up about how awful George W. Bush is. After all, none of us have ever been President.

Sincerely, Tick, Fort Worth, TX
MKeefer666@aol.com

To whom it may concern:

Which way to the front?

As I sit here, someplace cold and wet these days, I wait for the time to pass. I am fully aware of the importance of time and that in the end it is all that we are left with. God knows that in my life, I've wasted more then my fair share. There are sections of my life that passed as if a year was a weekend, but here and now, I wish time would hurry by. Instead it crawls along.

So what should I tell the readers of *MRR*? Should I tell them about my recent sentence to a far off desert land? Should

I tell them of my return home when I swore never to return, and yet only months later I find myself back in the same situation? Should I tell them of my home, the "real world," that now only seems like a dream? Only now, when the conveniences of daily life are nonexistent, is when they are truly appreciated. I haven't seen a copy of *MRR* in damn near ten years, and when I received my first current issue I was surprised to see articles by Stars and Stripes quoted and printed.

I would like to think that I am, in small way, playing an important role in the grand scheme of things. Or at least that's what I like to tell myself. Over the last few years it's been harder and harder to tell myself that. Some are able to soldier on through the barren wasteland with seemingly impossible burdens from home to bear. There are those who would return if called upon again. Others crack under the slightest bit of pressure. I think the hardest thing to deal with is the constant lies. A lot of us were told to expect a desert version of "Apocalypse Now." Fortunately, past experiences have taught me to know better. The news of a reasonable return date that has instantly turned into an unreasonable one has dampened things a bit. To add insult to injury, the reason for our extension was a blatant lie. We are nothing more then pawns in a global chess game.

I would like to thank any of you who have donated time, money, or materials in support of us during the holiday season. It all meant a lot to us here. And to all of you who will buy me a drink once I return home, I thank you in advance.

Now, you might be asking what the hell all of this has to do with *MRR* and/or Punk Rock? Well, truth be known, not a damn thing. I've just always had a great love of the music. I've read a lot in *MRR* about the politics concerning the deployment of the armed forces, but I haven't read anything concerning the men and women actually doing the job there. I thought this might be a new perspective for the publication.

Whiskey Sam
S-Edwards@myway.co

Hey folks at *MRR*—

I recently read the review done on us (Savage Lucy) and I want to say thanx!! It makes us feel soooo warm and fuzzy inside to know that the folks at *MRR* like our "music". But I noticed that the reviewer did not know much about our band, and drew up a lot of conclusions about us that are not true. So I would like to give you in full detail a description on our band. This might jeopardize our coolness, but it must be told.

Savage Lucy was formed in 2002 by I, Ah-Nah, on bass, and Polly Rhythm—drummer. We started when we were twelve years old. We are from a small town called Ellensburg, which is 100 miles east of Seattle. We've gone through lots of guitar players, and that's why it is only she and I on the EP. We were in between guitarists at the time, kind of like The Clash with their drummer not being on their first album. So I'm sorry, but we are not British. We got in touch with Squirrel records in July of '03, and they wanted to release something of us, so we said we'd do a single. It turned into an EP later because "Dead Boys Stay Dead" and "I'm an Accident" are connected into one song file, and we couldn't have a blank sided record, although The Atomsmashers seemed to pull that one off. Anyways, Savage Lucy is now four people, Ah-Nah C. Lobotomy—vox/bass, Polly Rhythm—Drums/vox, Riko Starr—Guitar, and Gonzo—Guitar.

We are all fourteen except Gonzo aka Ryan, he is our second guitarist and is eighteen. We have a full length coming out in early spring that will be DIY. We have played with many bands around the NW such as: The Minds, The Diskords, The Briefs, The Stuck Ups, Mea Culpa, The Epoxies, etc...and continue to make many friends.

We love *MRR*, and thank you for your kind support, never die!!!

Ah-Nah C. Lobotomy
www.savagelucy.com
804 E Tacoma st
Ellensburg, WA 98926

Dear Maximumrocknroll readers—

I am writing as one of three punk academics who are currently co-editing a collection on the contemporary (post-1980) punk and hardcore scenes. We are writing to invite contributions to the volume by punks, most likely (though this is not a requirement) those who have one foot in academia. The book will consider issues such as resistance, commodification, social class, geography, identity (gender, race, sexual diversity, etc.), and activism.

While we welcome ideas for contributions, we are less interested in those which are simply descriptions of local scenes or aspects of the punk movement. Each contribution should address larger theoretical and political issues in an explicit manner. We are looking for chapters of about 4,000-6,000 words written for academic readers as well as punks looking for serious discussion of their movement. The deadline is July 1, 2004. For more information, please write to bookofpunk@yahoo.com.

Thanks!
Ben

Hi *MRR*—

My name is XandreyX. I live in Republic Of Belarus, in Minsk. Among the employment (I play in several HC groups, I do a zine, and a distro) is the project to which I give recently to more time. This is a website—www.xsk8x.sxe.ru. The site is devoted to all that connects straight edge and skateboarding. I very much like sk8board—recently I began to learn that there are similar people with similar sights and interests. In my country there are not enough sk8'rs in XXX. We at present have not enough information in our country—it is very difficult to find something, so we very much ask if you know groups in which participants of See go for a drive on sk8, if there are any interesting articles, interview—let us know please. If you are SxE and sk8'r, it would be courageous to send us the photos and video, music, we shall place all this on a site.

Also we knows, that in groups Token Entry, No For An Answer, Uniform Choice, 411, Black Train Jack and Underdog someone was fond of sk8. Also on a site we place video and music on themes about sk8 or SxE. The big request is to send any information. We very much like it. It would be very desirable to make very informative site with set of video and photos. Also in our plans is to make a compilation "Skateboarding ruined my life" with groups where participants go for a drive on sk8. You can send the records for participation! We very much want to adjust such our plans and aspirations with people with all world for teamwork and the help.

Our contact
www.xsk8x.sxe.ru
e-mail:xsk8x@mail.ru
Zhitkivich Andrey
220138, Belarus, Minsk, PO Box 31
Good Luck—stay str8 xxx sk8 or die

MRR—
I'm writing because after reading Felix Von Havoc's column, I became very interested in Jonathan Richman. Unfortunately there was no mention of whether there is any Richman material available (bootlegs, demos, studio material). I really hope that something does exist, as I'd really like to hear what Richman had to say.
Thanks and take care,
Sam Thomas III
Inglewood, CA

Check your local record store—if they don't have it, ask if they can special order—it's all been reissued. —Anandi

Hi there *Maximus Rocknrollus—*
This is a letter about the review section of your zine. No I ain't gonna slate any of the reviewers. What pisses me off is no one seems to include post paid prices. Why not?! For this is a bit of a headache when you wanna buy stuff. OK, so there's lots of websites/emails to contact the bands, but not everybody's got a computer and free access to one doesn't exist where I live anymore. Cheapest in town is three euros per hour. So what usually happens is I gotta send a letter to the band/ label asking how much the record is there, wait for a reply then send off the cash. Then I wait again until the postie comes. Sometimes this can take a month or two if you're waiting for stuff from another continent. So bands and labels do yourselves a favor, include your prices. It makes it easier and cheaper for some of us. And you'll shift more records because sometimes people just won't bother and nip off down the local chain store and buy something shitty instead.
Keep DIY alive! Thanks for listening.
J. Jobby
Lost in Europe

MRR—
What's up, this is Sikander from Life Set Struggle. I just read the review of our new 7" and I thought I'd make a few comments. First of all thanks for the kind words...now, about the songs...

It's funny how you say you noticed a recurring theme in my lyrics, and then picked out the two songs that our guitar player wrote ("Trapped" and "Still Fucked".) There is no way you would have known this, since it doesn't say who wrote which songs in our layout, but I thought I'd just point out that Stimpy wrote those, which leads me to my second point.

Here's an excerpt from your review: "I've spent some time in Michigan, and let me tell you, it isn't half as bad as living in Ohio. Remember that." Actually, everyone in Life Set Struggle lives in Ohio, except for myself. Perhaps that's where the distraught lyrics come from? The weird thing is that Stimpy constantly says he loves the Midwest. I guess it's some sort of pride thing. I wouldn't sing those songs if I didn't agree with them, but I must say that I'd be lying if they represented how I feel all the time. Anyone that knows me can tell you I'm generally a pretty happy and positive dude; I don't have too many reasons to be singing depressing songs. That's not to say that I haven't had some bad days myself though, so that's my justification.

Once again, thanks for the kind words, and keep up the good work on the zine.
Later, Sikander
PS— The world needs another issue of Jesus Come Back.
PPS— Listen to Threatener.
sikanderxe@aol.com

MRR—
Hey man, how you doing today? My name is Danny Gallegos Jr. My friend, Joshua Cartretti told me to write you and ask about some information on *Book Your Own Fucking Life.* Joshua and I did some time docked up together, and we had some very in-depth talks about our ways of life, and things of interest to each of us. He turned me onto some different ideas about life and ways to look at it.

So I'm writing you with the hope that your can help me learn more about *BYOFL.*
Thanks for your time and help.
Take care,
Danny Gallegos Jr.
PS I'm now free from prison and want to learn.

Book Your Own Fucking Life *is no longer coming out in a print format. However, the website—www.byofl.org—is operational and useful. Check it out. —Anandi*

Dear *Maximumrocknroll—*
I was surprised to find that the review for the Katyn 7" in the February 2004 issue (#249) had been listed as if the record were exclusively performed by Katyn, when, in fact, it is a split 7", with the other side having been assembled by Rise From Ruin. I'm sure that the misprint was unintentional, but I also think that members of both bands would appreciate a correction. I thank you for your time in reading this.
Sincerely,
A Reader
sheebob@knology.net

MRR—
I started reading *MRR* in 1982 starting with issue #1. At the time, I was 19 and had grown up in a small, mostly rural town in the South. I had been listening to punk for two years. My politics had always been left wing, but at that point I'd not yet been exposed to any anarchist, socialist, or communist ideology. I was immediately suspicious of Tim Yohannan. What was this thirty-ish, former hippie and avowed communist doing in the punk scene? The politics expressed by Tim and some of the other columnists were more radical than my own, but as time went by I was drawn in, especially by Tim. His commitment to rational discussion won me over. The apolitical and right wing punks who were sure that Tim wanted to brainwash the punk youth ended up looking silly, I thought, next to Tim's fair-minded clarity. He had become one of my punk teachers.

The other person who became one of my punk teachers is Bessie Oakley (bass player for the Wrecks—see "Punk Is an Attitude" off the first *MRR* comp). She was briefly an *MRR* columnist. Although I never got to know Tim personally I did get to know Bessie a little. *MRR* #13 featured a "Does Punk Suck?" section with essays from various people in the scene at the

time. I thought Bessie's essay was the most insightful. She impressed me most because one minute she could be stating some harsh truth about the terrible ways people treated each other in the scene and then the next she could be incredibly optimistic about the future of that scene. She understood how unfair life often was, but she never lost her ability to see beyond the negative quagmires that so many people seem to get lost in. If she ever became depressed about her own life she never let it show. She always had the energy, strength, and vision to carry on. As a young person who was often depressed about my own life, I paid attention and learned. I think of Tim and Bessie as having given me my punk education. What I learned from them still contributes to the way I look at the world today even though Tim is no longer with us and Bessie has long since dropped out of the punk scene. I haven't had any communication with her since the late 80s, but we still have a mutual friend and I'll try to make sure that she sees this letter. If she thinks I've misrepresented her views in any way in any part of this letter maybe you'll hear from her.

So, why has this been on my mind lately? I've been reading with great interest the writing that Arwen has done regarding Rich Mackin and the accusations of sexual assault against him. Let me acknowledge that I am a contributor to the *Razorcake* website. I have never met nor had any communication with Rich, nor have I met or had any communication with Sean and Felizon who put out *Razorcake* and who publish books under the Gorsky Press name. My only communication has been with Todd Taylor (Sean and Felizon's other press partner). When Rich's column detailing his side of the story appeared in *Razorcake* #16 I read it closely just as I did Sean's column regarding his response to the accusations. I recall thinking that Rich was, as Arwen rightly called him, a "creep." I didn't think he was a rapist, if the incidents happened exactly as he claimed, but I felt he did deserve to be "called out" for his behavior. I didn't have a problem with Sean's column. I thought he handled the situation maturely and tried to be fair to both sides.

Then, I read Arwen's column in *MRR* #247. I thought that she made some really good points, and I decided that I needed to go back and re-read Sean's column because, clearly, I must have missed something. When I re-read Sean's column and began comparing it to Arwen's interpretation of it I realized that my initial response to Sean's column had been correct. Arwen had considerably misrepresented what he wrote. I don't have time to do a point-by-point comparison, but there are a few things that I feel strongly enough about to mention. Arwen, claiming to quote Sean about one of Rich's accusers writes, "she won't feel like herself again until that injury undergoes therapy." What Sean actually wrote was about Rich and his "self-destructive" tendencies and the article clearly states, "he won't feel like himself again that injury undergoes therapy." Sean argues that both Rich and his accusers need counseling but Arwen states, "Sean uses the same argument—that they've been hurt—to argue that she does, and he doesn't need therapy." Did Arwen change a gender-specific pronoun just to strengthen her case or was this merely a typo?

The other thing I found particularly hurtful from Arwen was this misrepresentation: "Sean is tired of hearing about women who are victimized by men, he says. He is tired of hearing about women who have to heal," After reading that comment I would think that Sean is some sexist, macho jerk belittling Rich's accusers. Here's some of what Sean had to say about women who need to heal: "starting with the very first allegation, we have a woman who is asking for help. She doesn't need a lynch mob. She doesn't need a blacklist or forums or slanderous flyers or accusatory posters in bathrooms. Tali needs someone to help her through these issues that are tormenting her. And in the typical American way, people run off and fight half-cocked battles on her behalf; they seek vengeance on an ill-conceived idea of evil rather than helping this woman." In my opinion, the above writing does not convey the "tired of hearing about it" tone that Arwen claims is prevalent in Sean's column. After careful study of both columns I was left with the uneasy feeling that Arwen intentionally misrepresented Sean's true intent. I have no idea why she would do this, but this distorted view of the facts is not what I found so inspiring in *MRR* in my youth.

In *MRR* #249, Rich wrote his response to Arwen's column. While I certainly do not wish to be viewed as defending Rich, I found Arwen's response to his letter troubling as well. For example, when Rich talked about his attempts to reform and educate himself about sexual abuse issues, he recommends a book called *You Just Don't Understand* by Deborah Tannen, Ph.D., which he calls "a discussion on communication itself, especially on communication styles between men and women." Arwen replied, "I am not fooled for a second by your dubious efforts toward self-improvement; even those seem geared toward excusing your behavior (books that explain why women can't make their needs understood to men? Whatever.)" When I read Arwen's "Whatever," I thought, "Did Arwen just dismiss everything that Deborah Tannen wrote in her book in one word?" I've never read that book; I'm assuming Arwen hasn't either. But her one word dismissal of it seems as cold as she accuses Sean and Rich of being. Maybe Deborah Tannen was raped or sexually abused herself. If so, does she deserve Arwen's "whatever?"

I understand if every woman in the punk scene and otherwise now wants to brand Rich an enemy. But from people in the scene with a forum, like Arwen or myself, I expect something more when it comes to the printed word. Would it have been such a compromise for Arwen to say to Rich, "You say you're trying to change—good luck with that, we'll be watching"? I have no way of knowing if Rich is sincere about his desire to change and Arwen doesn't know either. Her assumption that he's just trying to clear his name is exactly the brand of cynicism I expect from the mainstream world. Yes, she may very well be right about him, but what initially attracted me to the politics of punk that I wrote about earlier is the possibilities for change that didn't seem to exist in the mainstream world. Just as Rich's accusers need support from the punk community, if Rich is ever going to change, he needs some support too. I'm not saying that it needs to come from every woman in the punk scene or even from women at all, but I'd like to see it come from people in positions of influence like Arwen. If we're ever going to eliminate rape and sexual abuse, some of us have to have a dialogue with those who have committed these acts in the past and now express a desire to change, even if we have our doubts about their willingness to change.

I feel that Arwen's justifiable intensity about this subject comes from personal experience that I can't possibly know as a

male in this society. But the more genderless, idealistic side of me wishes that she could see that Sean is more ally than adversary and that Rich deserves an acknowledgement that we hope he's sincere about his newfound direction. I wouldn't think of this as giving him a "get out of jail free" card, more like a "get well soon" card. The cynicism of the mainstream world has made us all sick at one time or another. We need to find a way to rationally sort out our differences without name-calling and distortion if we want this world to change for the better. The George Bushes of the world are hoping we fail.

Chris Peigler
Chrisplr@hotmail.com

Chris,
First things first. I didn't misquote Sean (I know we're all tired, but go on, go back and check the passage). However, I did make a mistake in interpreting Sean's meaning: he did in fact propose in his column that Mackin, as well as his accuser, needed therapy.

About her, Sean wrote, "Even I can see that she's been injured emotionally. She won't feel like herself again until that injury undergoes therapy."

About Mackin, Sean wrote, "Rich is a lot of things, but he's not violent. And that's what rape and sexual assault are: violent. So Rich doesn't need therapy to curb his non-existent violent tendencies. For the most part, Rich is a really good guy. I consider him my friend. But I have to admit that he's self-destructive, and he needs to stop being so self-destructive. Again, there's nothing wrong with Rich, but he has been injured emotionally somewhere along the line, and he won't feel like himself until that injury undergoes therapy."

I made my error somewhere around, "So Rich doesn't need therapy to curb his non-existent violent tendencies." It was unintentional. I realized it shortly after the magazine was printed, acknowledged it on the phone with Sean, and am glad for the opportunity to do so publicly now. But frankly, "my case" doesn't require any sleight of hand, even if I were inclined to that sort of thing (I'm not). I really have plenty of material for "my case" without having to sabotage any pronouns or misrepresent anybody.

Sean's quote about Mackin is a fine example of the fuzzy logic that tends to shroud sexual assault. The reasoning goes like this: the guy can't be an assaulter because he isn't a violent guy, and sexual assaulters are violent. Furthermore, the guy can't be an assaulter because he's my friend, and I'm only friends with good guys.

I think people frequently have this response, at least initially, when accusations of sexual assault or rape are levelled toward people they know. I've wrestled with it too. But if you hold this reasoning up to the light, it disintegrates. Sexual assaulters have to be friends with somebody, right? Violent people aren't always violent in public, or even with their friends. And another thing—violent people aren't always cruel or vindictive; sometimes they're just greedy or stupid.

(Incidentally, where does this self-destructive thing come in? From where I'm standing, Mackin's sense of self-preservation seems pretty robust. And in any case, I thought we were worried about his habit of hurting other people, not himself.)

To illustrate my "hurtful" remarks about Sean's attitude toward women, and to illustrate his sensitive nature, you quote from Sean's column again. He wrote that Mackin's accuser "needs someone to help her through these issues that are tormenting her," etc., etc. Call me cynical all you like, but none of this sounds compassionate to me—it sounds patronizing and false. Sean was not in a position to offer healing to these women through therapy or whatever, but he was in a position to deal out honest acknowledgement to their grievances, and with it, some justice. Instead, he was dismissive and defensive, to the point of using the women's names in his column when he could have easily avoided it.

I scoffed at Tannen's book in my letter to Mackin, it's true. If my scorn were based solely on the book's title, you would be right to say it was reactionary. I should have given some background. My scorn comes from Mackin's description of the book in his last column in Razorcake *(#17). He wrote about how according to the author, men and women have different styles of communicating. Whether or not this is true, referencing it was far cry from acknowledging his own fuck-ups. It implied that Mackin's alleged assaults were simply misunderstandings based on gender—she said one thing, he heard another. She said, "Breasts are off limits," he heard, "Kiss my boob."*

This point was made more clearly when Mackin postulated that most women would object to waking up to a sexual touch, whereas most guys would enjoy it. Again he framed the problem as an issue of gender, not of trust. I'm only one example of a woman, but I can tell you that in a trusting, safe, sexual relationship (serious or not), I wouldn't necessarily mind being woken up that way. Nor do I think it's quite safe to say that guys, in general, are OK with it.

Mackin used Tannen's analysis to evade responsiblity for his serious violations of trust (whatever else they were, they were certainly that), and I took exception to his weak (at best), phony (at worst) gestures of attention to his chronic pushiness toward women.

So you're right, Chris—my responses to the letters in MRR *#249 were intense. But you completely ignored all the reasons I gave for being angry. Instead, you assumed my intensity came from experiences "you can't possibly know." How about trying to imagine? Instead of chastising me for not supporting Mackin in his quest for self-improvement, you could have spent a minute thinking about what it's like to be on the other side. That might have really been useful.*

The most important point you make, you make accidentally. It's almost too sad a point to bring up. You bring in Bessie Oakley (for no other reason I can fathom than to indicate that at one point, you had respect for the opinions of a punk girl). You mention that Bessie understood how unfair life was, and so on, but that she always had "energy, strength, and vision to carry on." Despite how hard it was to deal with the bullshit, she was, at least sometimes, "incredibly optimistic about the future of the scene."

But where is she now? Despite all those high hopes, "she has long since dropped out of the punk scene." Tim worked here till he died, of course, and a small handful of our shitworkers, including some columnists, have been with MRR *since the early 80s—but not Bessie, or, in fact, any of the first or second wave of women who came through—correct me if I'm wrong. This phenomenon isn't limited to* MRR *or the zine world. Ever heard someone wonder why there aren't more girls at shows? More punks than ever are in their mid or late 30s, or older, and still going strong. Ask yourself, why aren't more of them women?*
—Arwen

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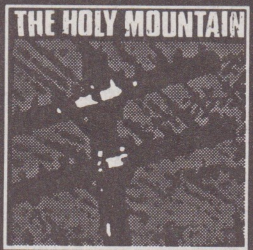

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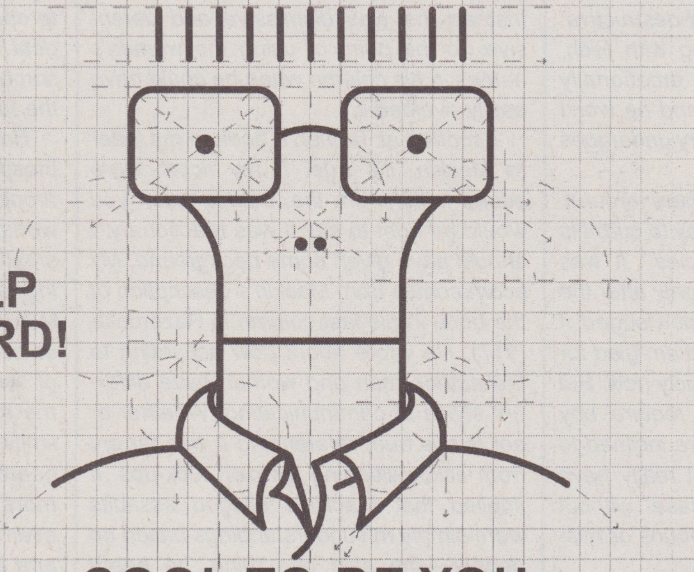

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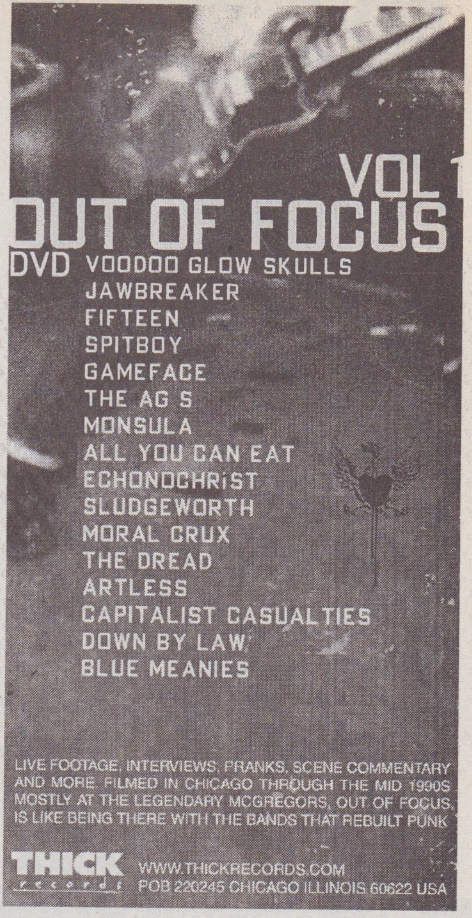

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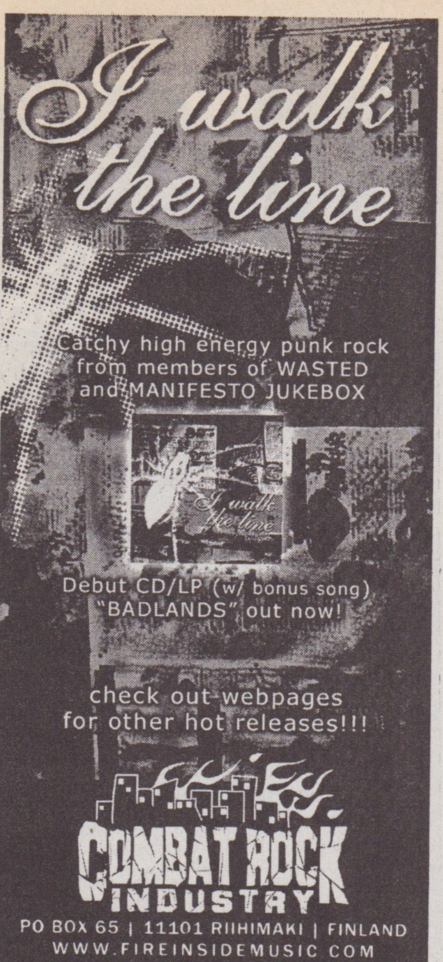

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COLUMNS

Mykel Board sez: YOU'RE WRONG!

[Mykel's note: The first part of this column (until the asterisks) appeared on February 30, in *New York Weekly*, a local newspaper I sometimes freelance for. Originally I wrote it in a more journalistic form, minus the KISZ references. The rest appears here, in the April issue of *MRR*, for the first time.]

I'm this big kid, and as a father, I get to see the world through the eyes of the really young ones. I learn more from them than they learn from me. —Michael Jackson

Before I would hurt a child, I would slit my wrists. —Michael Jackson

Neverland is still the only place on earth where I feel absolutely, 100 percent comfortable. —Macaulay Culkin

It's as tasty as teenage body fluids. Czech beer. The best in the world. Though you can't get the uber-Guinness, U-Fleku, in the US, Pilsner Urquell is everywhere. If you're lucky, you can also get this bottled brew KISZ (pronounced 'kiss'). It's a dark malty tasting Czech beer.

I'm in Bar Nomizu. The help have scribbled *Kisz* on the chalkboard for the first time. I approach the bartender, a fat old Irish guy. His lower lip hangs Mick Jagger style against his chin.

I'm with Kenji, a Japanese student of mine who's 25 years old, but looks 16. I explain about the Czech beer and suggest he order one for each of us. He walks up to the bartender.

"Can I have two Kiszes?" he asks.

"Yo!" answers the bartender. "You think I'm Michael Jackson?"

That starts me thinking. I guess it was as expected as a Britney Spears divorce... er... annulment. Somebody trying to wring big bucks out of Michael Jackson. Ten million dollars in hush money is honey for the bears who want a piece of the next ten million. On top of that, Jacko hasn't been ingratiating himself to his record label. He called his boss racist and complained about major label rip-offs. Imagine their joy at an album tanking because of bad publicity. They'd sure like *an incident*. Puff, whamo slamo! It happened.

The Michael Jackson story is an ironic one. If the music isn't punkrock, the saga is. Weird. I used to *hate* Michael Jackson. Now, he's my idol.

Back in 1982, Michael Jackson represented everything wrong in music. Rock'n'roll, that music of rebellion, of independence, of anger and humor, was being usurped. Mr. Goody moon-walking two shoes was taking over. Teens and preteens should follow the outsiders: Elvis, The Rolling Stones, The Ramones. Now they were following a nose job version of Mr. Rogers. Rock'n'rollers should be hated. Parents should call for their blood. They should get in trouble, and cause more trouble. Michael Jackson? He was a Jehovah's Witness for fuck's sake! He was the death of rock'n'roll. I hated Michael Jackson for turning what I loved into something...nice! How disgusting!

Then things started happening. There were accusations. A court case. A ten million dollar payoff.

"How cool," I thought. "A ten million dollar kiddie whore. Work once and retire. I bet Mom and Dad get a big cut... not to mention the lawyers, or whoever negotiated. From now on, any kid who shakes hands with MJ is gonna want a million bucks. Life is gonna be difficult for the ever-whitening one."

It took a while, but it happened again. Some kid who Jackson was trying to help... to be nice to... is perverted by greedy parents. This time the moon-walker isn't paying up. He's standing his ground. He's talking. He's saying that it's okay for adults and children to sleep together. That touch is good. That affection is good. That the body is not evil and closeness is not bad.

There are cultures, Mongolia among them, where it's normal for adults and children to sleep in the same bed. It's warm. People can show affection just by being close in the warmth of sleep. It's no accident that *we are close* means we're fond of each other.

Baby monkeys deprived of their parents and friends, but raised with a soft dummy-adult monkey, cling to it and sleep with it. They do better than monkeys deprived of their parents, but raised with other monkeys their own age. Touch, is as important to psychological health as water is to physical health. The more the better. Deprive someone of it, they go crazy and die.

Did "something else" besides touch go on in that bed? I doubt it. MJ had too much to lose. Besides, what parent, given Michael's reputation, would let their child stay overnight with the guy, if they weren't planning a million dollar blackmail?

No one will ever know for sure. I say it doesn't matter. As long as no one forced anyone to do anything, whatever happened was OK.

While the incest taboo seems pretty universal (though most of the "proof" has been written by Christians with biased eyes), adult-child sex is *not* taboo. In fact, in some cultures, it's mandatory. In some West African countries, it is a rite of passage, like a bar mitzvah, for a young boy to be fucked by his elders. It was common in Greece and samurai-era Japan.

It's only Puritanism and Judeo-Protestantism that make it *bad*. It's no shock that Catholic priests do the nook with choirboys. They're not Puritans. Only in our too-quickly spreading culture, would people think something that feels as good as sex is *bad*. Only in a sick society would intimate touching be called *molestation*.

Now MJ is fighting back. He's not going as far as I'd like, but he is going far. He is talking about kids sleeping with adults. He is talking about fun, and closeness and an unspoiled thrill with your body and the body of others. He's fighting the world to do it. That's punk.

So Michael Jackson, this Kisz is for you. You are *bad* in the best sense of the word. You are talking about what others run from. You're letting the world know that people who like kids, *like kids*. You're brave enough to say the "wrong" thing. You show your bruises. I believe you. You're childlike in the freest most wonderful sense of the word. And you're innocent... in all senses of that word.

You'll probably hang for this. That's what happens to anyone who's got the true spirit of rock'n'roll.

It's not long after this article appears that I get a strange voicemail message.

"Good evening," comes the very business-sounding voice. "My name is Jeff Kwatinetz. I have some personal business to discuss with you. Please call me collect..." He leaves a number.

A collect call? This must be good, I figure. I return the call the next day.

"Mr. Board," he says, "I am Michael Jackson's manager. I sent him the article you wrote. Mr. Jackson was so impressed he wants to meet you. Would you be available next weekend?"

"Hmmm," I say, "where would that meeting take place?"

"In Neverland," says Kwatinetz. "Mr. Jackson will send a car to pick you up, and take you to his private jet. You can return the same day if you like. Or you can spend the night as Mr. Jackson's guest and return the next day."

I'm gonna pass up an opportunity like that? Yeah, right.

The trip from the airport is rather uneventful. Kwatinetz, a rather ordinary grey-suited shave-needing lawyer-type, meets me in a limo. We drive to the large brown gates at the entrance to Neverland.

Beyond the gates is a tiny train station, like you might see going from cage to cage in a kiddie zoo. Beyond that spins a merry-go-round with a red and white dome. Beyond that, a Ferris Wheel turns slowly in the light breeze.

We drive up to a building that looks like a spruced-up horror movie mansion. I can't see around the sides, but the entrance, behind a fountain, is the crotch of a V, formed by the meeting of two huge wings. The building itself is a giant brown and white structure. It has half a dozen chimneys and seems to stretch on forever. Kwatinetz gets out and opens the car door on my side.

"This is as far as I go," he says. "You just go through the front door and identify yourself. Michael will be waiting for you."

A slim young man, with high cheekbones, meets me at the door. As it turns out, I don't have to identify myself.

"Mykel Board?" he asks.

I nod.

"Michael has been expecting you."

I follow his slender figure down a long hallway, enjoying the view.

We walk past scores of framed photos. I recognize Shirley Temple, Gary Coleman, Macaulay Culkin, Mickey Rooney, Ron Howard (as Opie in *The Andy Griffith Show*), Brooke Shields, River Phoenix (a still from *Stand By Me*), David Cassidy, Leif Garrett, The Hanson Brothers, and Donny Osmond. Each photo is autographed.

At the end of the hall is a large door painted with diagonal orange and green stripes. It's the kind of color combination where your eyes can't really focus on one color without the other going blurry. As we near the door, it opens. The young man gestures for me to step inside. I do.

Immediately a thin stream of cold water hits me in the face. I hear a peal of laughter. It's a high, childlike laugh. Like kids playing in the sand. It's Michael Jackson. He's got a water pistol in his hand.

"Got you! Got you! Ha ha. I got you!" chants Michael as I wipe the water from my face.

Michael is taller than I am, but who isn't? I'd guess he's about five ten. He's wearing a white shirt and loose black pants, belted with a thin black belt that rests on his hips.

"Sorry," says Michael, offering me a handkerchief. "I couldn't resist. Here, let's go into the dining room."

We walk through this antechamber into a carpeted room with a huge wooden dining table. Around the table are plush wooden chairs, sort of a combination of a normal dining room chair and an overstuffed easy chair.

"Sit down there," says Michael, pointing to the end seat. He sits at the corner, half facing me.

In person, he doesn't look half as freakish as he does on TV or in the papers. They must Photoshop him to make him look bad. Yeah, he's pale, but not pasty white. Yeah, his nose is tiny and artificial-looking, but it doesn't look like it's gonna fall off.

"Kwatinetz found that article you wrote," he says. "I thought it was brilliant. I get so much shi... do do from the press. They hate me... a black guy does good... anything to sell the rags... When I finally see something good, I just want to cry."

Tears are *not* welling up in his eyes. Instead, there is a mischievous good-natured look. Like a child telling what he'd done in school that day, when he really didn't do it.

Not that he's lying. But there is a childlike sincerity where the truth is just another kind of fun.

"I try not to let all this stuff hurt me," he says. "You can't imagine what it's like getting called these names."

"Well," I say, "I've been called a few myself."

He laughs.

"But what they call my crimes!" he says. "My crimes! My crimes are loving children. This is America. Can it be so bad to love children?"

"This is a Christian country..." I start telling him.

"But it's not only Christians!" he says. "Jews, Muslims, even people with no religion. They all hate me. They judge me guilty. Guilty of the worst things."

"Americans are Christian without even knowing it." I feel myself going into rant mode. "Puritanism is in their blood. Why do you think we can't drink on the street or fuck before we're 18? Why do you think conservatives want to censor sex and drugs and liberals want to censor cigarettes and violence? Why do you think *everybody* thinks you're guilty?"

"But Christians talk about love," he protests. "They say you should love your neighbor. God is love. Love love love."

"It's a sterile, chaste kind of love," I answer. "It's necrophilia for a bloody guy hung on an x-shaped pair of two-by-fours. It's an out of body love that covers a self-hate so deep you could swim in it."

"But those awful things they said I did..." he continues. "I wouldn't hurt a child."

"Would that be hurting?" I ask. "Yes, I'm sure you didn't do anything sexual with that boy. But even if you did, would that be so bad?"

"But Mykel," he says, "sex with a child is wrong."

"Why?" I ask.

"Well..." he pauses for a moment. "They're not ready yet. They don't know what they're getting into."

"They know what feels good and what doesn't," I answer. "They know how to say no. That's more than a lot of adults who work for a living."

He laughs again. A great hearty boyish laugh.

At this point, the door opens. A beautiful Indian boy, barefoot, walks into the room. He wears one of those robes like waiters in an Indian restaurant. He carries a tray. On the tray is a pitcher of milk and a huge stack of Oreos.

We share the repast. I could use a beer instead of milk. I ask for something boozeful.

"Oh, I don't drink," says Michael. "I'm a Jehovah's Witness. We don't put anything bad in our bodies."

I think about going into my *alcohol is a health food* spiel, but I don't.

I can't. The door opens again. In walk about a dozen little kids. I guess their ages are from 7 (a little girl with blond Marilyn Monroe-like hair) to 14 (a red-headed boy, with a freckle-filled face.) As if they've rehearsed, they form a circle around us, holding hands. Michael Jackson backs away from me and joins the circle. They dance around me.

Ring around the rosie. Pocket full of posy. Ashes ashes. We all fall DOWN! They crash to the floor hugging each other and rolling around. Michael wrestles the redhead and pins him to the floor. The meeting is over.

ENDNOTES: [Visitors to my website: mykelboard.com or subscribers (email to: god@mykelboard.com) will receive a few extra endnotes. There are just too many to keep up with.]

>I don't know if it's true, but I hope it is dept: I forgot who sent this to me. It seems too good to be true, but you never know:

A Charlotte, NC, lawyer bought a box of very expensive cigars. He insured them against fire among other things. Having smoked them all, the lawyer filed a claim against the insurance company.

The lawyer stated the cigars were lost "in a series of small fires." The insurance company refused to pay, citing the obvious reason: that the man had consumed the cigars in the normal fashion. The lawyer sued...and won!

In delivering the ruling, the judge agreed with the insurance company that the claim was frivolous. However, the judge also said that the lawyer held a policy from the insurance company that said the cigars were insurable and guaranteed them against fire. They did not

define what they considered "unacceptable fire." Therefore, they had to pay damages.

Rather than endure the lengthy and costly appeal process, the insurance company accepted the ruling. They paid $15,000 to the lawyer for the rare cigars lost in the "fires."

After the lawyer cashed the check, the insurance company had him arrested on 24 counts of ARSON. With his own insurance claim and testimony from the previous case being used against him, they convicted the lawyer of intentionally burning his insured property. The judge in this case sentenced him to 24 months in jail and a $24,000 fine.

Whoops, I just checked it out at urbanlegends.com. It's fake. Too bad!

>*Just 'cause there are no gays dept:* It's annoying when the mainstream catches up with me. I've been writing for years that there are no gay people... or hets. There are only people who have convinced themselves to limit their sexual possibilities. Now an elementary school agrees with me.

According to the latest issue of *Censorship News*, a seven-year-old was sent home for telling another a child that his mother is "gay." The child explained that 'gay is when a girl likes another girl.'" The teacher required the child to write several times, "I will never use the word 'gay' in school again."

Now I'm waiting for a school to send home a kid who uses "hetero" in class. Now start writing. 100 times. "There is no such thing as a heterosexual."

> *Adbusters* reports that a recent agreement between ABC and the Campbell's Soup Company said that during soup-sponsored shows, Barbara Walters and other hosts must "try to weave a soup message into their regular on-air banter."

Now, Michael, as you held that tender young thing in your arms, running your hands lower, between his legs, did you think of grasping his chicken noodle?

>*Is this any way to get a free plug? dept:* This guy, Jimmy Reject, sends me a copy of his book *The Enemy's Within.* It's a punkrock story of a debauched life of sex, drugs, and punk. He expects me to give him a free mention in my column. Okay, fair enough, I usually do. But I wonder if he thought I'd read the thing.

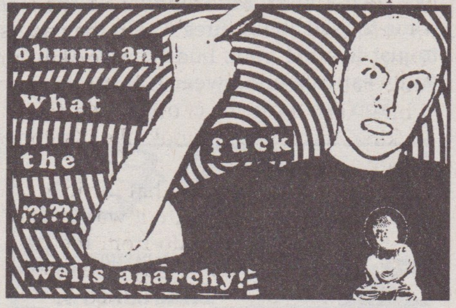
Page 14: Mykel Board seems more like Woody Allen than the punk pundit who argued in favor of racist bands and against radical feminism. Boy was he short. His voice was peppered with a quirky Jewish accent. He seemed like a dork.

Yeah, right. That's a way to get me to mention you in a column! The book is available for $8 from Blueboy Productions, 115 W. Squantum St., #203, Quincy MA 02171

>*Bush wudda given 'im the chair dept:* Ted sent me the story of a Texas man convicted of "slapping his wife." The sentence? A year of yoga classes to release his tension. The defendant says he hit his wife during an argument about her drinking problem. The wife was not sentenced.

>*Credit where it's due dept:* Yeah, I know one is for the votes. Yeah, the guy in charge of the other is incompetent. But Bush did two good things in a very short time. The first was amnesty for thousands of illegal aliens. The second was promising to have a human on Mars, though he probably said "man" instead of human. Two great decisions. You gotta applaud the guy. Can you name one good thing that Clinton did?

Greetings MaximumRockNRollers! I'm writing to you from a slightly different location than my columns from the past. I



mean that both geographically, and now—and I almost laugh when I say this—metaphysically.

I've taken up residence in the Hare Krishna temple about 30 minutes from my old house. As many of the punkers that read my column know, I've been a pretty miserable dude for years. Finally, the agony of all that suffering has delivered me to peace. Or, I should say, delivered me to the path toward peace. Or, actually, I guess I was on the path the whole time. I don't really know, but I will for sure ask my teacher and get back to you on that. Or you know what? Maybe I won't. At this point, *MaximumRockNRoll* is more of an illusion to me than anything else.

Really briefly, I do want to preemptively respond to my critics. Hey, I want Christianity and stuff out of punk and skateboarding as much as the next guy, but that's because those guys are dicks. Krishna fucking rules. All punkers should check this stuff out. And I hope and pray Mike and Arwen have the courage to run this column. Hare Krishna!

***

Contact me via email at my new address: ohmmman@hotmail.com.

The other night, I tried to balance on the side of the white wooden porch of the new punkhouse in the East Bay, holding my legs back behind me so I wouldn't kick some nineteen-year-old boy, composed of nothing other than malt liquor and hormones. The toilets were all broken, the way you'd expect, so us girls all went to pee bare asses up to the air in the backyard, and I thought about the East Bay as the separate town it is. Punks are younger there, and now I'm twenty-seven, stuck between the bright-eyed kids who may stay or move on and the older die-hards whose lives are flashback-induced retellings of Black Flag shows and one-night stands with punk heroines. I sat with my friends, the other girls in their late 20s whose lives had put them in different variations on the same generation, and I told them about my wild-ass last weekend in Vegas.

It was my housemate's 30th birthday, and she'd never been to Vegas. She likes a party, has been criticized for being a party girl, but haven't we all, and who wants that to stop? We packed together overstuffed suitcases, liters of whiskey, and crushed eye shadow compacts. Most days, I wear a black tanktop and tight pants with, you know, combat boots or whatever. Not for fucking Vegas. I had a tube top and a red suede miniskirt and some other hoochie bullshit all up over my body, I was scraping the bottom of all of my tubes of red lipstick. I brought one book, *The Diary of Anais Nin,* and I read it on the plane. The rest of the time I would have been challenged to read my name.

It was goddamn Superbowl Sunday, though, and every asshole who lives for football was in town, too. Guys drove down the Strip, aka Las Vegas Boulevard, with video cameras pointing out the shotgun window, examining our asses for their future viewing pleasure; some people think the showgirls are victimized by their nudity—at least they're properly compensated. All of the antiporn activists can cite all of their sources and hold onto their pure desires and hate the people they see as victims for the self-hatred that makes them put on the false eyelashes. But a lot of my heroines made it through that world, and they know a part of themselves and their customers they wouldn't otherwise. By not doing sex work I have deliberately chosen to avoid recognizing the secret depths of humanity, so I respect and revere the people who do it, who have the strength to let themselves really understand the hideousness of the human condition. I wanted tell this to the football-loving frat boys who'd overrun to this town, who saw women as dupes, who thought they knew the score. In general, I just kept walking, city-stoic, through the desert landscape that had been altered into an adult themepark of decadence.

I had a hole in my fishnets and this old fucker on an opposing escalator shout-

ed out: hey! You got a hole in your tights! I'm sure I got a hole somewhere yr. interested in, you Viagra motherfucker, but back off. Joey rode a mechanical bull in one of the casinos with her tits falling out of her shirt and her red lipstick perfect. The casino had a western theme and two-dollar frozen margaritas in plastic tumblers. I videotaped her on that slow-moving fake fur bull, surrounded by bored football fans watching TV and cutting into steaks, and we shouted hooray! at her gorgeousness and got the hell outta there.

Mornings, afternoons, early evenings spilled together, and we had lots of very serious conversations about love and loss I can't quite recall. Somebody had bought one of those travel guides and of course as usual, it was a better decision than I would have thought. They had a goddamn punk rock bar listed in it, and I'm sure you read this and find that to be a contradiction in terms, particularly if you're from a real city where something like punk rock hipsters exist. But see where I grew up, Phoenix goddamn Arizona, there was no such thing as a punk rock hipster; punks were seen as cool by the punks and no one else, except maybe a couple of the heshers. Vegas is similar, and so the Double Down Saloon is actually a punk bar. They have shows, but not all the time, and all the guys who work there look like tall versions of the *Another State of Mind*-era Mike Ness. The whole thing is pretty wild if you are used to San Francisco and shut down all-ages spaces and guys who expect to be worshipped because they have black hair. And hey, if anyone from out there is reading this and they know where my wallet is, please send it to the magazine cause I lost it in the Double Down Saloon and as a result, I'm all messed up. No library card or driver's license.

After I put "Needles and Pins," some Johnny Cash, and "I Wanna Be Your Dog" on the jukebox, I bought a couple of PBRs and found a table. It was sort of annoying to watch all the chicks kissing the asses of the guys in the touring band who seemed pretty dull to me, but what can you do. We kept drinking and got sorta friendly with the locals. I met some rad girl named Mary Ann who played rhythm guitar in a band out there—as you can imagine, there aren't a million chicks who play music in that scene. She filled me in on local bands and all-spaces until my friend was ready to cut up my face from his boredom and we went across the street to gyrate at the queer bar. I don't really dance—I guess I sorta jump around at shows, and I dance to the blues in my bedroom in my muddy work overalls, *I'm sitting here trying to drink my blues away / since my baby been gone I have every night and day.* But you know, I rarely go dancing. However we were all constantly reminding one another of the oft-repeated maxim, "What happens in Vegas, stays in Vegas," so I guess my butt is still living it up in Vegas, as I sit here in San Francisco, drinking coffee with soy milk, waiting for something to happen.

P.S. I just want to say it's a week before Valentine's Day, and I'm really feeling pretty bad for everybody, single or not, because it is such a miserable holiday. If you're with someone, you fight about Hallmark, commercialism, and the commodification of desire, and if you're single—even by choice—you are made to feel like such a loser. My solution, which will come to y'all about three weeks too late, is to just live the pain, buddy, wallow in it, and wear cute underwear. Ciao for now.

You can write me c/o *MRR*.

My Top Ten of 2003

Unfortunately, I missed the deadline for the annual *Top 10 Releases of 2003* section in last month's issue. After being back for only about a day and a half, the last thing I wanted to do was sit down and write this. Picking out a top 10 seemed a much more strenuous task than last year. Not to discredit the bands mentioned here, but I can confidently say that I still listen to the STRIKING DISTANCE 7" from last year's list more than most of the things listed here (if you haven't picked up *The Fuse Is Lit* yet, please do so). Good vinyl was especially hard to come by in 2003, as you will notice a dominant demo tape presence in this year's list. Here they go in no specific order:

1. RIGHTEOUS JAMS "In 2003" cassette – By far the best thing Lockin Out Records has released (and I am a big MENTAL fan). This band pretty much picks up where INVASION left off. With half of these songs being written by Jesse Standhard before he left the band, I thought I knew what I was in for. This blew away my expectations. Essential Mixtape Tracks: "Scream and Shout," "Righteous Jams," and "Invasion" (hell, they are all good, even the reggae dub!)

2. FAR FROM BREAKING "Identity" EP – The first side of this record is flawless. It sounds like songs CARRY ON would have eventually written if they had never heard of RIGHT BRIGADE and AMERICAN NIGHTMARE. Amazingly nice guys to boot. Essential Mixtape Tracks: All of Side A.

3. VIOLENT MINDS "Know It All" EP – This is KNOCKDOWN (see my 2002 list) without the breakdowns. Early 80s hardcore done extremely well. Almost makes me forget the fact that these guys are also in that rap metal band NO WARNING. Almost… Essential Mixtape Tracks: "I Don't Care," "Go to War," and "Violent Minds."

4. DESPERATE MEASURES "Never Enough Time" LP – Hardcore's touring juggernaut has finally walked out of the shadow of SIDE BY SIDE comparisons and come into their own with this release. Some people might be turned off by Ryan's new vocal approach, but I think his vocals have a much stronger presence here than on the 7." This was well worth the wait. Essential Mixtape Tracks: "Never Enough Time," "Moving On," and "Full Circle."

5. KNIFE FIGHT "What Have You Done?" EP – When the guitarist isn't drunk out of his gourd, this band destroys live. 11 songs on 45 RPM with an AMERICA's HARDCORE cover. Look for their next record on my top ten list for next year. Essential Mixtape Tracks: "Force Fed," "AA," and "Progress."

6. BROKEN NEEDLE "Demo" CD – I would of spent $1000 of my own money to put this Southern California band's demo out on vinyl. That's how good these 8 songs are. Most of you still haven't heard this. You're all fired. Essential Mixtape Tracks: "Waste Away," "Who the Fuck are You," and "Words of Abuse."

7. SUICIDE FILE "Twilight" LP – SUICIDE FILE dispel the hardcore full-length curse with a record that I can listen from start to flip to end without getting the slightest bit bored. 11 mid-paced songs with politically charged lyrics over some of the best drumming you'll ever hear from a hardcore band. Essential Mixtape Tracks: "Ashcroft," "Edge of Town," and "Song for Katy."

8. POINTING FINGER "Transcend" EP - I believe this 7" was officially released in 2002, but I didn't get it until early 2003. You really can't go wrong with anything they've released in the last year. Please overlook this band's horrible name and pick up this record. A lot of kids in the States are sleeping on this band, and that's a damn shame. This is easily one of my favorite positive hardcore bands to come out of Europe in a long time. Crucial Mixtape Tracks: "Transcend," "Quest For Trust," and "Another Reason."

9. INTERNAL AFFAIRS "Demo 2003" cassette – Some people questioned why I was into this demo so much given the "tough guy" nature of the lyrics. To an extent I can see where they were coming from, but after knowing Corey for awhile I can't really take lyrics like "Your mouth is running, let your feet do the same" seriously. Corey himself admits that a lot of the lyrics were thrown together last minute in the studio. Regardless, this cassette is one of the fastest demos the straight edge scene has seen in awhile. That alone should have you already own-

ing it. Essential Mixtape Tracks: "Come Get It," "No Way Out," and "Nothing."

10. A-TEAM "Clusterfuck" EP – It's interesting to listen to this shortly after the SUICIDE FILE and hearing similarities in the songwriting. However, where SUICIDE FILE takes a politically relevant approach in the lyrics, A-TEAM just takes a "fuck everybody" approach. Following its Boston hardcore forefathers, A-TEAM is out to rain on everybody's parade. With songs about killer Christmas beasts, babies, and jaded scenesters, this EP is by far the punkest hardcore release to come out in 2003. I love it. Essential Mixtape Tracks: "Bear Trap," "Control Your Baby," and "Your Happiness My Target."

Honorable Mentions: LIGHTS OUT demo, TOWN OF HARDCORE comp EP, MENTAL EP on Bridge 9, STOP AND THINK Both Demos LP, BREAK THROUGH demo, and the L'AMICO DI MARTUCCI EP.

Repress of the Month

Contrast Records has finally repressed the ALONE IN A CROWD 7." This is quite possibly the most jocked hardcore record of the last three years, which is funny because it used to go for less than $20 at a record store. It has been booted many times, so it is nice to see an official repress. There are only 200 on limited green vinyl, and I imagine that by the time this goes to print they will be all gone. Rumor has it that there will be an enhanced CD version coming out with the only show ALONE IN THE CROWD ever played. You gotta pick that up if for no other reason that to hear Jules and his priceless stage banter. "These people have worked harder than you will in your entire LIFE!!"

It's Good To Be Back

It's been almost three weeks since OUR TURN got back to San Francisco, but I just wanted to make sure that I wrote a quick thank you to everyone on the East Coast that let us hop on a show, crash at their place, or just took the time to watch a band with only a demo out. While the weather was ridiculously cold, the response we got from everyone was more than warm. I would also like to thank the First Step for inviting us, Pete Russo for the lodging and last minute graphic work, Alex D. for the last minute shows in upstate NY, Sean YB for everything, the Gallagher Bros. (Crucial Chuck and Brian), Nick Third Party and Fletcher from Buffalo, Brian F. and Jeff Start Today for taking pictures, and last but not least Crystal Horn and all the Texas crew that drove 25 hours for the first set of shows. I hope I didn't forget anyone. A special thanks goes out to Negative Steve for fronting the money for the demo 7".

Huge *MRR* Auction

Well it looks like the Maximum crew has finally gone overboard in the politically correct department. They are going to be selling off all of their "fascist" hardcore and punk records from the *MRR* archive. This includes anything they deem militant or right wing. All of their militant vegan, hardline, and yes, militant straight edge records will be sold at a significantly lower than eBay price. This includes anything from VEGAN REICH, RAID, AGNOSTIC FRONT, CHORUS OF DISAPPROVAL, I HATE YOU, and PROJECT X. They are even selling the JUDGE *Chung King Can Suck It* LP! Everything is on a first come first serve basis, and anybody at *MRR* is exempt. I can't believe they are doing this. I have seen the pile, and there has got to be at least 300 records that they are getting rid of (maybe 75 worth owning). Contact the magazine if you are interested..

Endnotes:

-IMPORTANT: If you are sending me a demo please include lyrics. Make a cover at Kinkos while you're at it. Sending CD-Rs and tapes with the name of the band and nothing else is lame and won't get reviewed. Why I should make the effort if you haven't?

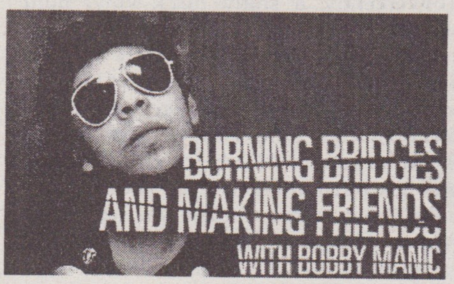
-Be on the look out for a new Bay Area band called RIGHT ON. Should have a demo out by the time you read this.

-Redemption 87 are doing some reunion shows in the Bay Area.

-TFS took us to the Red Bamboo in New York City. One of the best veg(etari)an restaurants I have ever been to. Check it.

-On that thought, what's up with the new influx of hardcore kids not being vegetarian? Seriously, I guess bands need to start writing about these things again for people to take notice. Of course someone could always just repress the OUTSPOKEN Survival EP...

-You can contact me at ih8thekids@hotmail.com or Carl Cordova, 746 Baker Street, San Francisco, CA 94115.



This has been a really weird month around the Manic House. I don't wanna get too emo, but in a nutshell: lost my job, lost my girlfriend, lost my place to live and now I'm trying to kinda claw my way back to sanity and order. I'm sorry if you find this column lacking, but too fucking bad! I had my heart broken, assholes. I can't be expected to entertain you dweebs while I am busy writing bad poetry and making unicorn drawings. Maybe next month things will get better; until then you'll love what I give you and shut the hell up.

The SLEAZIES just released their *Trite Ditties and Meaningless Crap* album on the Pelado label. Perhaps you're familiar with Pelado's body of work so you already know what to expect—for those of you who don't, shame on you. The Sleazies are like the STITCHES' retarded kid brothers. They have a real handle on the "old school" punk sound (SEX PISTOLS, SHAM 69) and the LA/ OC beach punk sound (GEARS, WEIRDOS) and the lyrics of a true cretin. Too dumb to really offend, too catchy to write off completly. www.peladorecords.com

Last month I briefly mentioned the new HORNY MORMONS retrospective CD. I was so caught up in the excitement that I forgot to explain why this CD is so fucking important and what makes it so fucking great. The Mormons were a corky off-beat combo best known for their split LP with POUNDED CLOWN and various appearances on David Hayes's comps (Very Small, Too Many and Lookout's *Can of Pork*). I can't tell you how many times I spun the Pounded Clown split in high school. The band consisted of a slew of Sacramento big dicks, most notoriously Jay from the LIZARDS, Mike from the BANANAS, and Chris Woodhouse formerly of the now sadly defunct FM KNIVES. Anyone who is a fan of their bands should really find a copy of this and take a listen. I think this is what happens when you grow up in a place like this listening to way too much MOJO NIXON and DEAD MILKMEN. Check out www.sacramento-usa.org for more info and if you purchase the CD from World's Best Comics in Arden, it comes with a bonus disc of the band doing a FLIPPER cover set. Not that I like Flipper, but it's still cool to have.

I've been getting a lot of demos and promotional CDs in the mail lately. Some are pretty good and some are downright awful. I still haven't decided if I'm going to review everything I get or just the things I particularly like. This month I'll just mention a few of the things I enjoyed or found interesting.

First up is the TENNESSEE TRAINCRASH. They sent me two three song CDRs that really left me wanting more. I think this band is capable of writing and arranging great songs but they suffer from shabby recording. The minimal recordings have a certain charm but if they hooked up with the right producer and a bit of a budget they could probably end up on everyone's love list. The male and female vocals brilliantly offset one another and remind me of some of the stuff Sympathy has been putting out, but it's also not too far away from some of the hip indie rock bands that the kids are loving so much today. This is a good combination of Billy Childish bare bones blues

garage and the YEAH YEAH YEAHS/ HOT HOT HEAT's art school gloss gloss glossiness. thetenesseetraincrash@elvis.com

I went to a show a few weeks ago and kid from Italy pulled me aside and asked if I was "Bo-bee Man-eek". I said close enough. He gave me his band's CD. I usually don't take things from strangers but I graciously accepted and was planning on tossing it as soon as his back was turned, but as it turns out, the bassist of his band, JOHN BRADY'S ILLEGITIMATE CHILDREN, was one of my first high school crushes. I don't remember how I fumbled and fouled things up with her (I have a knack for suppressing bad memories), but nostalgia was enough to convince me to keep the CD and give it a listen. Boy am I glad I did. This is flat-out honest-to-goodness pop punk that doesn't sound just like every other pop punk band swinging off the hairs of Ben Weasel's nutsack. You can hear a little TEEN IDOLS, a little WESTON, a little JAWBREAKER, and a lot of well written hooks. If I knew the Bay Area still had good pop punk bands like this maybe I wouldn't have left (yeah right). Write to them at: 189 Precita St., San Francisco, CA 94110.

Under the stacks of CDs in my bathroom I have a CD-R of the new FOUR EYES album which is set to be released some time soon. It's friggin' great. Woodhouse turned the knobs, so you know the sound isn't too slick but doesn't sound like ass either. The Four Eyes are the true Geek Rock poster boys. Songs about D&D, Deathrace 2000, *Lord of the Rings*, and everything else that is geek. All I have to say is death to false geekdom and hooray for the Four Eyes.

Speaking of up coming releases... Jeff from the NEWTOWN ANIMALS is fronting a new band called the CLONES, and they will be releasing their debut album any day now on Dirtnap Records. A friend of the band shared some mp3's with me and I'm utterly stunned. The fun and goofiness of the NTA is still there but the songs are catchier, the singing is better and there's a fucking keyboard.

Fans of the BRIEFS and EPOXIES already have this on their list, but I advise the rest of you to give it a chance too. Dirtnap is also releasing the GIRLS album pretty soon. I can't wait for that.

One last thing before I sign off, there are some rumors going around that a certain former *MRR* columnist will reunite his band one more time and are possibly playing a short set next week in Chicago. I don't wanna name names, and the show will be over before this sees print, but I also heard he might be up to doing a few more shows as well.

Bottom Line:

Keep sending mail to 2930 33rd St. Apt C, Sacramento, CA 95817 until I tell you not to.

I gave my kid free reign over her clothes choices and this is what I got: A wanna-be beautiful princess slave to fashion, not a punk rock bombshell.

Don't allow a kid to wear "punk" clothes and that's all they're gonna want to do. Allow them free reign (to of course choose the "punk" clothes) and they want to wear the stuff you wouldn't in a million years. It figures, right?

Well, it didn't start out so bad. I mean, at first, how could it? Babes in warm weather climates need little more than their diaper and a onesie. And it was actually more simple than that because my babe spent lots of time naked.

I don't remember exactly when the bad stuff with clothes started, but it's been here for a while now and not seeming to go away any time soon. The last month, especially, has been pulling-my-own-hair-out hell.

I think it started when I realized that we have the exact opposite taste in clothes. I do remember gagging during a thrift-shopping day when she was old enough to contribute to the selection process. That trip, I resorted to lying. I had to. There was just no way I could buy that light blue gingham frock with lace around its hem and at its neck, a floppy bow bigger than her head. So I lied and said it wasn't her size. I lied and said all the other poofy frillies weren't her size either. Conveniently, a shiny black vinyl mini skirt was her size, so I bought that.

There I was manipulatively controlling what went into her closet, but I would soon lose that ground. On subsequent thrift trips, my lying ways carried on with the same mantra, "Darn, it's not your size, but this other thing will fit you." It was only a few months before she had some replies of her own. She'd say, "That's OK. I can grow into it." Or if she didn't like what I was choosing, "I will *never* wear it. I only wear things that sparkle." Over the months, her taste changed slightly as she moved from glittery sparkles to things with bows to things with "diamonds," but it was all the same girly gag-o-rama to me.

At home, things weren't any kind of a big deal for a long time. She'd just sort through her clothes and choose something. It's only been the last few months that the whole getting-dressed thing has become the day's major drama. She's become much more selective.

Maybe it started after a weekend with her cousin who changed outfits ten times a day. Or maybe it was the influence of her new friend who until very recently would only wear the same overalls every single day. (I promise you, those overalls were crustier and stankier than the filthiest of the punks you know.)

Though I may not ever clearly understand what during the course of her development spurned this current state of clothing hyperconsciousness, I do know that this issue has come to the point of me half just resigning to it and half exerting great patience to negotiate through it.

It started out that she all of a sudden had to change outfits several times I day. It didn't really bother me, but it was driving her dad crazy. That lasted maybe a month until she swung the other way. Now, she stood on a chair gazing into her closet, unable to choose a thing to wear. She'd enlist our help. But whatever we suggested was met with a resounding NO! The entire closet, end to end, would be gone through and not a thing agreed upon. Nothing in her dresser would do either. It became a drudging game, an extreme test of patience, sometimes ending in bribery, sometimes in tears if we were in a hurry and sometimes in ultimatums.

That changed when she found a "green dress like I've always wanted." She wore the dress at some point during every day for a week. Right around the time her interest in wearing the dress every day was waning, she found a polyester-lined, purple, pink, and blue, flowered, lacy midriff top at a garage sale. It wasn't immediate that she wanted to wear it everyday. She fluctuated between the "I can't choose, you choose, but I'm not going to like anything you choose" game and wanting to wear that purple flowered shirt for days in a row. But finally, the purple flowered shirt won. It came to her never wanting to take it off, not even for a bath, not even for it to be washed.

My mom finally convinced her to let her handwash it and she could wear it again when it was dry. Those few hours of drying time were long ones filled with, "Is it dry yet? Can I wear it now?"

I was starting to really hate that shirt. Not because she wore it every day, but because of why she was wearing it every day. She'd go up to random people and ask, "Do you like my shirt?" And she'd of course receive the props she was digging for. When we kindly asked her to stop asking people if they like her clothes, she obliged, kind of. She instead approached people, silently striking a pose, usually one with her chest puffed out, until they said something approving of her get-up.

Totally irritated, I started telling her she couldn't wear the shirt every day. She protested, "But it's my favorite! I want to look beautiful!" I told her that no matter what she wears, she's beautiful. "But my

other clothes aren't my favorite. They're not beautiful." And on and on until we were, over the course of a few days, at a standstill in our negotiating, discussing, and pleading. There were a couple of days that were totally debilitated by the impasse.

I budged. I took her to a thrift shop as part of this deal: You can pick out a few things you think are beautiful if you promise to wear them and not your purple flowered shirt every day. She agreed. But the shopping was utter hell. An hour and a half in one store and she couldn't pick out a damn thing. Even more hours in three other stores yielded three skirts, a shirt and a dress. I was completely exhausted and worn down after those hours and hours of indecisive yet uber-selective beautiful clothes hunting.

I realized that this first step toward us recovering from the crippling effects of the purple flowered shirt did not do anything to get a grip on what was the root of my irritation, her intense need to, as she calls it, "be fancy," but it was better than standstill.

And I thought it was time for a few rules:

1. You can't wear the same thing to school every day.
2. You can wear whatever you want at home as long as it's not filthy in the basket waiting to be washed.

Dress-up costumes are for home and playtime out and about, not for school or the grocery store.

I think they're fair and simple enough because each comes as a result of some history with this issue. But because I try my best to be conscious of illegitimate authority and coercion in my parenting, I've thought about them in a couple different ways. One hand, I think these rules might be an actual benefit to her because it initially seemed she was getting overwhelmed by the unlimited choices in front of her, hence the "I can't choose" game that was not only played at home but during the hours at the stores, too. But on the other hand, these rules are definitely somewhat coercive because I'm limiting her absolute freedom of clothing choice in favor of my own agenda, which is by not allowing her to wear certain things during certain times or under certain circumstances, the digging for compliments will be lessened and the idea that constant beauty approval is necessary for positive attention will be trumped.

Two weeks into their implementation, I think they have been helpful. The three thrifted skirts, shirt, and dress are to thank, too. But the issues are far from resolved. I'm starting to wonder if they ever will be. She has been easy about wearing a different outfit to school every day, but don't think for a second that she's not parading herself in front of her teacher every morning until she hears, "Oh, you're stylin'." And she's joyfully exclaimed, "You're the best!" when I tell her yes, she can wear that same dress after school every day until it needs to be washed. But her little manipulative genius streak has been at work, too.

As much as she's a slave to brightly colored, sparkly, ruffly beauty, she's a natural contrarian. She'll wear what the rules allow, but she deliberately puts her shoes on the wrong feet, wears her underwear inside out *and* backwards and wears no socks so her feet will stink more than if she wore socks. And if I dare let on that I like her choice of outfit, she will change. For the record, more often than not, she automatically says no to everything I say or ask, even if I'm asking her if she wants to go to the beach and get ice cream, something she lives for. She's gotta say no first and then an enthusiastic *yes* follows a few seconds later.

And she's also constantly testing boundaries as I'm constantly striving to find the balance between setting boundaries or not. When I see signs of behavior that suggest to me that she's wondering where the boundaries are, I set some realistic ones like I think I did with the three rules above. And when I see that I have set a boundary that might not be necessary or needs modification, again based on clues from her behavior, I remove or modify them.

Since the three clothing rules have been in place, she has been changing her underwear twice, three times, up to four times a day. I ask her why and she says because they were giving her a wedgey or that she got a little pee pee in them. When I gather them into the dirty clothes basket, I just happen to notice that they're dry and the larger sized no-wedgie briefs. Which means this—she's figured out that underwear is mommy's time-to-do-laundry gauge. When there are no more clean pairs in the drawer, it's off to the laundry mat we go. And she knows what that means—she can then wear her *favorite* beautiful shirt! (see rule 2) Basically, I've got a kid who was begging for boundaries and when I set them and they seem to be working as evidenced by the fact that there has been a lot less struggle between us, she works hard to finagle around them. She's begging everyday, "Let's go do laundry!"

She just doesn't stop, it seems. Even with the books I've been checking out at the library, if they're not colorful enough or if there are not enough beautiful girl characters whose dresses are also beautiful, forget it. Forget the Woody Guthrie, poet of the people, beautifully illustrated children's book. Forget the Players in Pigtails book about how one determined girl followed a dream and became a player in the first-ever All-American Girls Professional Baseball League.

So I stop and remind myself to be patient and that it's rather unrealistic to expect an almost four-year-old to latch onto every new idea I introduce her to—that she's going to have her own ideas. And that learning anything well takes time. I remind myself that I can try my best to guide her, but that she is her own person and it's OK for us to be different in a lot of ways and have different tastes. (That's not to say though that I don't get a little bummed when she looks at what I'm wearing and says, "Yuk, mommy. Change please. Your clothes are not beautiful.")

So I don't think the root cause of our power struggles and constant negotiations is only her needing to be contrary to whatever I say. Plus, her wanting to look like all of the beautifully dressed princesses she loves to read about and watch in movies is playing a big role, too.

And so I am pretty bummed to realize, ten years too early I might add, that my theory of "forbid nothing and there's nothing to rebel against" that knocks the prevailing theory of "teenage rebellion no matter what" that is often espoused by more experienced parents than I has been proven false, with my kid anyway.

Punkparents, get in touch. yardwideyarns@hotmail.com

NEW mailing address: PO Box 220331 / Hollywood, FL 33022.

RALL DEAL

Once again, Bush and his top officials are responsible for an outrageous scandal whose monumental scale and grotesquely terrifying implications for our democracy make Watergate look like a fraternity prank. Yet the miscreants are getting away scot-free.

As usual.

The Bush Administration, reported *The New York Times* on January 8, "has quietly withdrawn from Iraq a 400-member military team whose job was to scour the country for military equipment. The step was described by some military officials as a sign that the administration might have lowered its sights and no longer expected to uncover the caches of chemical and biological weapons that the White House cited as a principal reason for going to war last March."

The Bushies have good reason to think they won't find any weapons of mass destruction (WMD) in Iraq. They knew full well that the flimsy reports they used to sell their sleazy oil war were more than four years out of date—ancient history by

intelligence standards. And, as *The Washington Post* reports, a newly discovered memo to Saddam Hussein indicates that Mr. Worse Than Hitler got rid of his WMDs back in 1991. Unlike the United States, which unilaterally partitioned Iraq into no-fly zones and created a new Kurdish state, Saddam appears to have complied with the ceasefire agreement that ended the Gulf War.

1,400 members of the Iraq Survey Group have been searching for WMDs during the last seven months. They've spent hundreds of millions of dollars. They've been to every government installation in the country. They've come up empty-handed.

All we've gotten are numerous false alarms, each trumpeted as vindication of the Bushies' claim that Saddam would have nuked or gassed or poisoned us if we hadn't taken him out first. On May 31, Bush said: "You remember when Colin Powell stood up in front of the world, and he said Iraq has got laboratories, mobile labs to build biological weapons...we've so far discovered two. And we'll find more weapons as time goes on. But for those who say we haven't found the banned manufacturing devices or banned weapons, they're wrong. We found them."

Actually, we didn't find anything. Both "mobile labs" turned out to be rusted trailers used for filling weather balloons. But Bush's lies got so much more media coverage than subsequent attempts to set the record straight that all but the most press-obsessed were misled. By June 18, 35 percent of Americans told a Harris poll that they believed that we had already *found* WMDs in Iraq. And 48 percent thought that Bush's fictional link between Iraq and Al Qaeda had been "proven."

Iraq's WMDs were probably destroyed at least 13 years ago. Fortunately for Bush, they exist only in the one place he cares about: the deluded minds of a frighteningly ignorant American electorate.

Which is why our troops in Iraq are no longer bothering to go through the motions of searching for them. And why Bush yanked the Joint Captured Matériel Exploitation Group that was supposed to destroy WMDs if and when they had been discovered. "Its work was essentially done," a Defense Department official told *The Times*, because it was tired of "waiting for something to dispose of."

Nearly 500 American servicemen have been killed in the war against Iraq. At least 2,400 more have been wounded. We've killed so many Iraqis—tens of thousands, certainly—that the Pentagon can't keep count. We've borrowed more than $160 billion to pay for this extravaganza, with many more hundreds of billions to follow. And what was the point of this waste of life and treasure? "To disarm Iraq," Bush told us.

But Iraq, as everyone from the CIA to Hans Blix to Saddam told us beforehand, didn't have any arms to dis.

Calling off the WMD hunt is Bush's tacit admission that he lied about the reasons for war. It's hard to think of anything worse that a president can do. It's even harder to imagine the American people, so cynically accepting of deception, holding him accountable.

NEW MAILING ADDRESS: If you've tried to write to me during the past few months you may have gotten your stuff back because the Post Office canceled my box. They're supposed to put a bill in my box but never did. Then, when they didn't get paid, they gave a box I'd had since 1992 to some other dude. Nice! Anyway, I now have a new box and it's all paid up, so if you want to get in touch I'm at Ted Rall, PO Box 1134, New York NY 10027. And there's always e-mail: chet@rall.com.

NEW BOOK: It's pretty ridiculous that I've never done this sort of thing before, but I've finally gotten around to articulating my thoughts about American politics and specifically the fact that the left and the Democrats keep getting their asses kicked. The result is my new book WAKE UP, YOU'RE LIBERAL: HOW WE CAN TAKE AMERICA BACK FROM THE RIGHT (Soft Skull Press, approx. 276 pp., price TBD), due out in April. It includes advice to the broad spectrum of the American left from anarchists and socialists to mainline Democrats on everything from personal attitudes to TV campaign ads and choosing candidates, as well as proposes a new kind of Democratic Party based on a platform that I believe would be unbeatable. Based on three years of research and a lifetime of thought, this is my political magnum opus. You can order it through Soft Skull (softskull.com) or Amazon for now. As soon as the cover price is determined, I'll be selling autographed copies directly through my PO Box.

No.

TRANSCRIPT OF THE *YEAR IN TESTICULAR STUDIES ADDRESS* (AFFECTIONATELY KNOWN AS *THE STATE OF THE SAC*), AUGUST 5TH, 2004
United States Capitol Building
Washington, DC

PRESIDENT BUSH: Mr. Speaker, Vice President Cheney, members of Congress, distinguished guests, urologists, and fellow citizens: I am grateful for your presence here tonight, only weeks after the State Of The Union address. Normally, the annual State Of The Sac address is delivered by a renowned urologist. This year, however, our great nation is faced with a grave testicular crisis that has affected me personally. I feel that, as your President, I must address you directly and tell the people of the United States what we are doing to confront this looming threat to the health of our nation's gonads.

As we gather here tonight, NASA scientists in Houston are working tirelessly to ready the first manned mission to the red planet of Mars. [*Applause*]

Certain people across the country have been questioning the necessity of such a mission in a time when our national deficit is over three trillion dollars and hundreds of thousands of American servicemen and women are deployed across the world in the war on terror. A letter I have here from Leroy Jones, age 10, from Oakland, California poses such a question: "Dear Mr. President, why are you going to spend a trillion dollars to put some honky on Mars when no one in my neighborhood has health insurance? What will poor people get out of the Mars mission? And since you so rich, will you send me a dollar so I can buy a candy bar?"

Tonight, Leroy, I will answer your questions, and the questions of people across our great, just nation and across the world where free people are able to ask questions like this, thanks to our great success in liberating such countries as Afghanistan, Iraq, and France. [*Applause*]

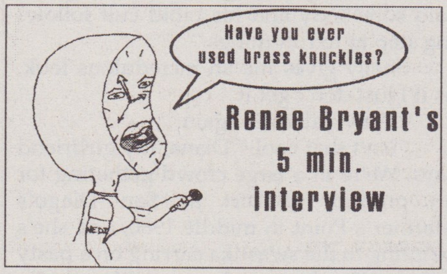
First, however, America must know what happened to me, and as this is a bit graphic you may want to turn on those parental monitoring filters. [*Laughter*] On January 21st, as I was preparing to open up a can of whup-ass on an uppity bull at my ranch in Texas, I noticed a weird feeling in the air followed by a strange sensation emanating from my testicular sac. After moseying over to the bathroom for a look, I realized that my testicles were glowing and felt very, very different than usual. Within ten minutes, I could see that deep doo-doo was under way that would change things for me—maybe forever. My left testicle was drooping noticeably, and kept stretching on downward until it worked its way all the way down my pant leg and came to rest, nestled in my boot like a baby bird. My right testicle, meanwhile, was swelling larger with every second and took on the consistency of a rock. It soon turned a bright orange color, and I had Laura give me a good swift kick to test its hardness. People of America, the honest truth in God's and our holy savior Jesus Christ's name, amen, is that I felt nothing.

I immediately called Vice President Cheney at his undisclosed location, and found that his testicles had also changed considerably. It seemed his right testicle had turned completely invisible, while his left one would periodically catch fire, leaving him uninjured but destroying his pants—every time. As everything has changed since the events of September 11th, we knew chances that this was merely a coincidence were very slim. I got into Air Force One and immediately headed back to Washington to get together a plan for what this administration has done best: Fight the good fight against Testicular Terror, for as long as it takes and wherever it takes us. [*Applause*] To elaborate further, I want to present the world-renowned physicist Dr. Reed Richards, of New York. [*Applause*]

DR. REED RICHARDS: Thank you, Mr. President. The following is what we know so far: The advanced atmospheric monitoring equipment at the headquarters of Fantastic Four/Halliburton research group in New York City revealed an odd irregularity on January 21st wherein two highly concentrated streams of cosmic rays were directed towards Texas and to the east coast, location undisclosed. These rays were highly concentrated on both the President and the Vice President's testicular sacs. As an individual who has had extensive personal experience with the long-term effects of cosmic rays, I immediately knew upon examination of the President and Vice President's testicular sacs that they had, indeed, been heavily exposed to the same type of cosmic rays that had altered the body chemistry of myself and three companions on a space mission long ago. Unlike the inadvertent exposure my companions and I received, there is reason to believe that these rays were consciously intended to target both the President and the Vice President, and their precision and trajectory leads us to conclude that they were directed from a technologically advanced mobile source on the leeward side of the planet Mars. [*Richards points to a small black dot on a slide projection of Mars on the wall*].

VICE PRESIDENT DICK CHENEY, VIA SATELLITE SCREEN, FROM AN UNDISCLOSED LOCATION: Thank you, Dr. Richards. [Applause. Dr. Richards nods and stretches his arm out 700 feet to turn a door knob in the back of the room, his hyper-elasticized body following suit and springing back through the door] As you can see, a new front in the war on terror is now open, and we will respond with all the force available to us as the world's most powerful force of freedom. Intelligence reports indicate that Osama bin Laden has switched back to his old identity as the mysterious Dr. Doom, and may have changed his location from the wilds of Pakistan to the cold desert of Mars, where he reputedly has a new cave from which to launch underhanded cosmic ray attacks such as those of January 21st. We are responding in kind. Within three weeks a massive troop mobilization will be ready for deployment to Mars, in space barges with the capacity to hold 100,000 soldiers each, to contend with this new cosmic threat. The barges are untested, but we assume them to be safe, at least for one-way transport. Additional spaceships will be sent to relieve troops as technology progresses enough to make that possible, which is estimated to be approximately 10 years in the future. [A flame shoots up suddenly from the Vice President's lap and abates just as quickly. He stands up, uncomfortably covering the huge burn hole in the front of his pants with his hands, and shuffles off screen]

PRESIDENT BUSH: Thank you, Mr. Cheney. [*Applause. The President's left testicle is stretched out of his pant leg, and begins to sway rhythmically back and forth*] As we see again, the enemies of freedom will do all in their power to spread violence, fear, and genital mutations. They are trying to shake the will of our country and our friends, but the United States of America will never be intimidated by thugs and assassins. We will go to Mars, and as for the question about the poor, we offer them the unprecedented opportunity to train as astronauts and help to preserve freedom across the solar system. We will fight this bizarre emasculation by whatever means are necessary, and we will win! [*Applause*] Oh, and Leroy, just to answer your last question: No, I won't send you a dollar. [*Applause. Standing Ovation. The President's left testicle gesticulates wildly*]



I have served on the Board of Directors for the Center for Community Action and Environmental Justice (www.ccaej.org) since 1999. This is begins my fourth non-consecutive year serving as the secretary for the board. I've written about this group a couple times before, in this column, when specific issues or actions/events have occurred. This is the longest I have been so intimately involved with a non-profit/activist group (excluding *MRR*). CCAEJ began in 1978, by the "small poor rural community of Glen Avon in its fight to stop pollution and gain access to decisions affecting their lives. This community in the Inland Valleys of southern California has been ravaged from continuing exposures to toxic chemicals from the Stringfellow Acid Pits, an abandoned toxic dump, known as one of the worst Superfund sites in the nation and California's top priority clean up sites. The mission of CCAEJ is "to work with community group in developing and sustaining democratically based, participatory organizations that promote involvement of a diverse segment of the community in ways that empower people and create safer, healthier, toxic–free places to live, work, learn and play."

When I first became involved with CCAEJ, we were working with a tiny budget trying to make a difference. Since then, the group and its budget have grown tremendously. I wanted to use this column as an opportunity to discuss some of the projects were working on or are involved with. The projects are based on the group's goals, which are to empower individuals, solve local problems, and develop comprehensive public policy changes.

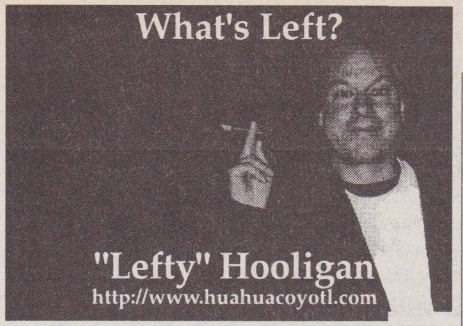
We have eight main campaigns/projects. The Healthy Communities Campaign seeks to reduce the levels of pollution to residents of at risk communities of the Inland Empire; prevent the siting of polluting facilities and inappropriate land use near residential area; and establish public policy that creates safe, clean, and healthy communities. The Safe Schools/Healthy Homes Project focuses on indoor air quality, lead, pesticide use, and land application of sewage sludge. The Desert Protection Campaign focuses on issues affecting the deserts of Riverside, particularly stopping the development of the proposed Eagle Mountain Dump. The Communities at Risk Project is an ongoing campaign working with communities identified as having an existing contaminated facility in their neighborhood. As a way to rebuild the Glen Avon Community, CCAEJ is developing 13-acres of land as community park (this is being funded as a result of the initial lawsuits surrounding Stringfellow and court orders). We are also establishing a Stringfellow archives and museum. Finally, leadership development within Riverside and San Bernardino has resulted in the Salta (Salud Ambiental, Latinas Tomando Accion/Environmental Health, Latinas Taking Action) Program. As a part of the same goal the Associates Program is designed to support, to empower and to increase the effectiveness of local organizations in the Riverside and San Bernardino areas (to see a list of our associates please go to www.ccaej.org).

Anyone that is interested in environmental issues (which that should be everyone because we all have a responsibility to future generations to keep the earth as healthy as possible) CCAEJ is a great resource/stepping stone for information. The executive director, Penny Newman, was a soccer mom/teacher's assistant

turned famous/powerful environmental activist successfully making a positive change, with CCAEJ, in her own community and beyond. She is an inspiration. All of us have the potential to make a positive change within our own communities.

Show-wise in the last few months the following bands entertained me (or one of my bandmates) in one way or another: Street Trash, Donny Brook, 46 Short, Madball, Terror, D.I., The Hitchhikers, Conspiracy of Thought, Cuauhetemoc, Narcoleptic Youth, The Voids, Terminal Holocaust, Ciril, The Frisk, The Scarred, The New York Rel-x, etc. The Los Crudos discografia and Refused EP comp CD are making me happy right now. The only reason I bought the Basement Jaxx CD is because Lisa Kekaula from the Bell Rays has a vocally powerful, amazing song on it. In her voice you hear all the greats: Tina Turner, Billy Holiday, Etta James, Sarah Vaughan, etc. When we stayed with Jamis and Glory in Los Cruces, New Mexico, they kept talking about how much they love Anti-Flag. I tried to resist listening to this band because, to be quite honest I'm not a real fan of the more pop oriented punk rock. Since, the two were so emphatic about the band I went out and spent my hard-earned teacher money on a few CDs. I actually like "Innocence is the First Casualty." I like all the rhetoric. They seem to be sincere and I appreciate that.

Well, for those of you who aren't familiar with my column: I have written for *MRR* since 1995. I teach fifth-grade at a year round school and have a MA in Educational Administration. I am an activist/feminist/humanist (if that means anything). I serve on the B.O.D. for CCAEJ. I sing for All or Nothing HC and do On the Rag Records. I think about publishing another issue of *ON THE RAG* zine (established 1994) often. I contribute writings to a few different zines/magazines. I am a retired dominatrix (having spent my early 20s as a substitute teacher, dominatrix, singer of He's Dead Jim, and zinester of *On the Rag*). Punk rock changed my life, helped to empower me with a DIY ethic, and has introduced me to the most interesting people and ideas. For those reasons and the belief I have in the potential of punk rock, I stick around the scene. I don't write this column for other people. I write for the sole purpose of communicating ideas and feelings. The same reason I sing in a band. I don't start a column thinking, "what will people think of this or what will make me look so punk or hardcore." I just write it, and if someone gets something out of it, even if it's just entertainment, great. So, with that, thanks for reading. You can send all critiques, criticism and praise to aonhc@earthink.net or webmistress@ontherag.net / PO Box 251, Norco, CA 92860-0251.



You still didn't feel like part of the left; but everything that was in opposition was good, including the neo-Nazis. [...] Fascism as such was in opposition though, and you found pure opposition better than this petit-bourgeois mediocrity. You considered everything good that didn't agree with it.

Michael "Bommi" Baumann, *How it all Began/Wie Alles Anfing* (1975)

"Isn't that cool!" Shelly, my girlfriend says. We're in a large crowd gathering for a concert at Santa Barbara's Earl Warren Show Grounds in late 1970, and she's pointing to a pasty pale couple in the parking lot both with long stringy hair and X's marked on their foreheads.

Manson supporters. The Tate-LaBianca murder trial is ongoing in LA, as is lurid media coverage of Manson and The Family. I notice the guy is wearing a tie-dyed t-shirt with "Don't Crucify Charlie!" in psychedelic lettering scrawled over the front.

"Not really." I say. "Unless your idea of cool is somebody whose rabid cult following butchers a bunch of rich Hollywood types in order to spark a race war, on the assumption that the blacks will win but be unable to rule, at which point said somebody and his rabid cult following step in to run things."

Shelly gives me an incredulous look, as if I just don't get it.

Déjà vu all over again.

"Isn't that cool!" Diana, my girlfriend says. We're in a large crowd gathering for an outdoor concert at San Diego's Mariner's Point in middle 1980, and she's pointing to the swastika earring on a pasty pale, viciously acned guy with rabidly spiked hair in the parking lot.

Fashion poseur. It's that annoying Brit-punk look, circa Malcolm McLaren and the Sex Pistols. The guy even has on bondage pants and a "God Save the Queen" t-shirt for chrissake.

"Not really." I say. "Unless your idea of cool is a totalitarian regime dedicated to creating an Aryan master race that butchered 25 million people in less than a decade, including 6 million Jews, 5 million Slavs, and countless Gypsies, homosexuals, union leaders, socialists and Communists in a war for world domination."

Diana gives me that familiar astounded look, as if I just don't get it.

So I guess I really don't get it. The whole transgressive thing. I mean I know what it is. Deliberately violating social limits, boundaries, conventions and tastes. Yeah, and there's transgressive art, literature, cinema, even—please fucking shoot me now—post-modern transgressive. Don't get me wrong; I do plenty of things that are against the law and social norms. I just don't acknowledge the validity of either over my life. To transgress means you believe there's something to transgress. One of history's great transgressives, Gregori Rasputin claimed that the greater the sin, the greater the redemption. As a recovering Catholic, I prefer not to believe in sin at all.

Part of the purpose, perhaps the main purpose of a transgressive act is to shock. Being deliberately shocking never did have much appeal to me. When I do drugs it's to get high. When I break some archaic sexual law it's for pleasure. I really don't care about the shock value of my acts.

Over ten years after Diana cooed about some punk's swazi bangle, in 1992 after I'd moved from San Diego to the Bay Area, I stroll into Berkeley's Café Mediterranean on Telegraph one Saturday morning. I'm heavily into coffee and my plan is for what I call the "double depth charge," two double espressos dropped into a very large cup of regular black coffee. I get a second large empty cup and head over to the half-and-half, where I split the steaming caffeine bomb between the cups and top each cup off with dairy. I think I also have something greasy on order with the grill they have going in the back in those days, so with a cup of diluted coffee in each hand, I look for a table among a roomful of Berkeley denizens who appear to have been seated in the same spots since the 1960's.

An oddly familiar woman stands in line waiting for coffee, about my age, pushing a baby carriage with a toddler strapped in. The kid is playing with a plastic toy and quietly repeating over and over something like "poopoo kaka shit shit shit." I recognize the woman as someone I went to school with at UC Santa Cruz in 1972. We'd done some flirting at the time, but never got involved because we were politically incompatible. She'd been a fervent Maoist and ardent supporter of China's Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution while I'd been a hippie yippie anarchist type. Twenty years later she's still stunning, and since I don't have a girlfriend and don't mind kids I walk over to chat her up.

"Hey Marcie, remember me from UCSC?" I ask, swigging from one of my coffee cups.

Marcie does. She introduces me to her son Benjamin, who doesn't bother looking up from his toy or his "poopoo kaka shit shit shit" mantra. Marcy is on her second

marriage, having decided to breed at the very last opportunity, when she's 35 and pushing her biological clock. Benjamin is now 4. She's a researcher at UC Berkeley and her husband is a professor at UC Davis. She met her current husband when her organization, the Bay Area Communist Union (BACU), merged with his organization, a split-off from the Revolutionary Communist Party (RCP) called the Revolutionary Workers Headquarters (RWHq), in September of 1979. They formally disaffiliated themselves from any Maoist organization before the RWHq merged with the Proletarian Unity League (PUL) to become the Freedom Road Socialist Organization (FRSO) in December 1985, but they remain active in the post-Maoist milieu, having recently worked on an anti-imperialist project with people from the Bay Area branch of the Prairie Fire Organizing Committee (PFOC) called Fireworks.

Her alphabet soup of New Communist Movement organizations gives me a headache, and I'm not too keen on the constant mention of her husband either.

"What's the deal with the kid's scat talk?" I finally ask, changing the subject as I finish one cup of coffee and start on the other.

"Oh, he's just doing that to irritate me," Marcie gives her kid a sideways glance. "He picked up some bad words in preschool and he knows I don't like him saying them in public."

As if on queue, Benjamin's voice rises. The kid knows when we're talking about him! A few café patrons turn to see where the shrill "poopoo kaka shit shit shit" is coming from.

"And if he knows what's good for him," Marcie's face turns red as she glares at Benjamin. "He'll shut up before we get home and I wash his mouth out with soap."

Benjamin's voice quickly drops, but he doesn't stop mumbling "poopoo kaka shit shit shit" entirely. As I pick up my breakfast order at the time I think, how ironic. Benjamin is a Maoist chip off the old block like when Mao said in the little red book: "We should support whatever the enemy opposes and oppose whatever the enemy supports." Like his '60's parents once did, Ben has declared everybody over 30 untrustworthy—in other words, the enemy—and he's engaged in scatological guerrilla warfare with his main enemy at the moment, his mom. Only much later, upon recalling the incident, do I realize that Benjamin was a little 4-year-old transgressive. Not that the two insights are incompatible. Mao's strategy has the same knee-jerk reactive spirit as does most deliberate transgressive activity.

What helped to bring about this tiny revelation was none other than Jeff Bale publishing his oh so transgressive, but now defunct zine *Hit List*. If ever anybody resembled a 4-year-old yelling "poopoo kaka shit shit shit" to shock and piss off everybody around him, it's Jeff Bale. In turn, *Hit List* made much of its in-your-face "bad attitude" and reveled in the transgressive. Quite revealing is the peep-show excitement with which Bale exposed the transgressive cache of neo-fascism to his readers in the first issue, and the child-molester-like glee with which he bragged in a much later issue about covering The Dwarves despite getting so much shit from the scene.

Ooooh, Jeff is such a baaaad widdow boy.

"Cultural transgression has gotten more and more difficult in recent decades," wrote Joe Conason about the influences on the Columbine killers in "Hitler Youth?" for *Salon*. The transgressive character of both *Hit List* and the subjects which the zine liked to cover was not merely the result of things being taken to their logical extreme by people trying to be progressively more offensive however.

"Unlike the bleak British industrialists, transgressive leftist 'art workers' like Karen Finley wanted to *épater les bourgeois* and promote good causes like feminism and gay liberation." Kevin Coogan wrote in "How Black is Black Metal?" for *Hit List*'s premier issue. "Since all good transgressives used drugs, liked porn, and despised 'middle America,' Norman Rockwell, Jesse Helms, and Pat Robertson, a natural alliance existed between the West Side liberals at MoMA and the downtown avant-garde at La Mama. A small group of mostly straight white male scenesters, however, used transgressive tactics to attack what they saw as the therapeutic left's hegemony over bohemia. Unapologetic bad boys in search of an aesthetic that couldn't be coopted, they turned to cult leaders like Manson and Jim Jones, serial killers like John Wayne Gacy, violent images of deformed or dismembered bodies, weird conspiracy theories from the far left and far right, UFO abduction tracts, and hate rants from black nationalists and Klansmen.

"Some wanted to '*épater les communists*' because they believed that artists should not live in a world of self-imposed censorship for fear of violating every leftist and feminist dogma de jour. There was also the fear that bohemia, long a bad boy Shangri-La of sex, drugs, and rock'n'roll, was turning into a therapeutic 'No Smoking' zone. And what better 'in-your-face' way to say 'fuck you' to the sissies, parlor pinks, and Feminazis than to play the ace card of transgression—aesthetic fascism."

In pinning down the transgressive attitude of this small group of mostly straight white male scenesters that Coogan called the "new hip regime of mean" and associated with the Feral House crowd, he might as well have been describing the staff and mission statement of *Hit List*. Coogan certainly nailed Bale's bitterness toward the Left of which he was once a part, as well as his promotion of an anti-PC transgressive-lite "cruel cool" bad attitude. At least with regard to neo-Nazism's transgressive appeal and much like his taste in music, Jeff's is very old news indeed. Michael Baumann's quote at the head of this column was almost 25 years old when Jeff first published *Hit List* in February/March of 1999, and anyone around in the mid to late '70's for the beginnings of various alternative musical scenes, as Bale claims to have been, would have been well aware of the fascination with neo-fascist imagery and themes in certain circles.

I do most of my political work at UC San Diego in 1980, where I publish a broadsheet called *Yaddah, Yaddah, Yaddah.* One side features a poster, the other side has ultra-left political propaganda. An anarchist comrade named Sven wants to do his own issue, which is to have a Dadaist/surrealist theme and hence be called the dada *Yaddah.* To help with his project, Sven recruits a couple of folks local to San Diego at the time, one of them being big-time transgressive and parafascist Boyd Rice.

Recall that the original Dadaists and surrealists were a very mixed bag of the ultra-left and ultra-right with the likes of Buñuel, Dali, Breton and Evola involved.

I meet Boyd Rice only once, when the dada *Yaddah* comes back from the press and we get our copies. He's done his black album five years earlier I think and is just starting up Non. Tall, gaunt and dressed all in black, Boyd doesn't say much except to invite us to a party. As I recall, he is rather soft spoken.

The party is a "Faces of Death" affair featuring an endless playing of that truly awful and mostly bogus video while misanthropic misfits in stupid clothes hang around, get high and listen to very bad music. The joyous occasion seems dedicated to Ian Curtis and Charles Manson going by the photographs on display, and the industrial, noise and goth tribes are all there in embryo. The graphic fascist imagery and outright Nazi regalia are also very much in evidence, complementing the Satanic and BD/SM themes. Clearly, the atmosphere is "we're so bad, so evil, so transgressive," and it's thick enough to cut with a Nazi dagger. It's one of the silliest, most boring parties I've ever been to actually.

While Bale is into the transgressive "angry white male" bit for its value to shock and piss off the PC Left, at least he doesn't make it his life like the Feral House folks do; Jim Goad, Michael Moynihan,

Adam Parfrey, Boyd Rice *et al* who can't get enough of their bad ass transgressive selves. Jeff would no doubt take issue that I accurately pegged his stunted emotional development to that of a scatological 4-year-old. He's finally landed the respectable academic position he's always wanted, so that perennial bad boy has a fallback now that he's pushing 60. The Feral House boys in turn are howling: "Damn straight, we're emotionally stunted 4-year-olds and proud of it. Woohooo!" Except of course that bad boys like Rice and Moynihan aren't quite bad enough to cop to their own beliefs and call themselves fascists.

Now, before you peg me as some kind of reactionary PC leftoid prude, note that I helped finance the publication of Jim Goad's *Answer Me! 1-4* zine compilation through AK Press, before Jimmy decided we were a bunch of crumbum lefties and refused to do further print runs. *Answer Me!*'s relentless raging misanthropy actually became one note and monotonous rather quickly but heck, anything that could get three young neo-Nazis to off themselves couldn't be all bad. I did it for the free speech/free press issues actually. Yes, I defend the rights of even those who should never have been socially promoted past kindergarten to publish whatever the hell they want.

Goddamn liberal!

One of these days I'll do a whole column on Mao's twisted "the enemy of my enemy is my friend" politics.

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For MRR #251 (4/04)

PERSONAL PROPAGANDA... Still no progress on my website at http://www.huahuacoyotl.com. If you can help me get things working again, or if you can recommend some software to automate the process, please contact me at the email address below. To find out my real name purchase my book, *End Time*, from AK Press (POB 40682, SF, CA 94140-0682) for $10. The book is called *Fim* in Portuguese and can be ordered from Conrad Editora (R. Maracaí, 185, Aclimação, 01534-030, São Paulo-SP, Brasil) for R$ 24,90. I can be contacted at hooligan3@mindspring.com.

Greg Palast is the author of the greatest book on current events I've ever read. Even if you fancy yourself to be rather politically astute, you'll discover that *The Best Democracy Money Can Buy* will open your eyes to government and corporate corruption…in a way that'll make you feel you were always blind before and only now have the power to see. Once you've empowered your eyes, your ears will also need a crucial dose of the truth. Greg Palast's new spoken word CD is out now on Alternative Tentacles. *It's Called Weapon of Mass Instruction*. It's live, it's jolting, and it's essential for you to hear. Greg was kind enough to answer a few of my questions about his book and CD.

Anonymous Boy: I felt I only became fully aware of the extent of Bush's theft of the 2000 Presidential election after I read your best-selling book, *The Best Democracy Money Can Buy*. I too was hung up on the "hanging chads" and had no idea about the hidden story. Katherine Harris used a company called ChoicePoint to prevent thousands of African Americans from voting. You wrote that Republicans plan to use the same voter-fraud techniques in 2004. The "Help America Vote Act," will make sure a "ChoicePoint" kind of computerized purging will happen again. Voters who select Democrats will be purged by computer, but this time it won't be localized in Florida only. It will happen on a national level. Doesn't this give you some sense that this whole upcoming presidential election is a waste of time? Bush is going to lie. He'll worm his way back into the presidency any way he can. No one can stop him because no one who claims to be his opposition is effectively using the information you've revealed to *stop* the purging. Why is this so? Why aren't the Democratic candidates raising hell about it? Why do you think they don't act upon the impending theft of the upcoming election with the sense of urgency it demands?

Greg: Don't say, "fuck it" and go the no-vote route. *Make* the slimes steal it. The Conspiracy *wants* you to give up. They can't steal *every* vote. And then there's the question, why don't Democrats stand up? For the same reason jellyfish don't: they're invertebrates.

AB: Your book has some really effective interior art by Winston Smith, the collage artist well known for his Dead Kennedys album covers. Your new spoken-word CD, *Weapon of Mass Instruction: Live* is being released on Jello Biafra's record label, Alternative Tentacles. How did you make this connection to the punk scene, and do you like punk rock music?

Greg: I lusted for Winston Smith's art for my book the moment I saw a compendium of his stuff. He's copied the murals off the interior of the psycho-commercial skull of the American nightmare. He can draw on one page what it takes me a whole chapter to write. It was funny: the big mainstream publisher said, "Why do you need these weird illustrations?" I said, "This book is for people who don't read the usual garbage. They'll get it." Do I like punk music? No, I despise all musical genres. Once a music form's got a name, it's dead—only the originals, the inventors, are worth listening too. Dead Kennedys, Jello Biafra, yes. Stockhauzen, 'Trane, yes. Big Juss, yes.

AB: Your CD is excellent. I think you began sounding slightly unsure and scattered, but your presentation really improved and became gripping by the time you spoke of Barrik/Sutton's bulldozers, and how they killed jewel miners in Tahzania by burying them alive. It probably wouldn't be easy for anyone to endure the retelling of such a horrific tale, but you were very impressive. Did you have much experience with speaking in front of a live audience when this was recorded in April of 2003? Do you hope to do more public speaking in the future, and if so, would you do anything differently?

Greg: Unsure and scattered! Hey, who jdu tink you are? I was probably getting over some jet-lag/hangover combo in the first couple tracks. It is difficult telling some of these stories; one reason I have lots of humor in my talks is that I might burst into tears otherwise (I've done that). Would I do anything differently? Yeah: I'd cheat, like in most spoken word recordings... combining the best segments from a dozen talks. What's good here is that it's raw, and sometimes raw is rough.

AB: Something in your verbal approach on the CD reminded me of the album, *The Law, Language, and Lenny Bruce*, which was released on Phil Spector's label. Lenny Bruce had a caustic sense of humor and therefore many of his legitimate social and political points were not taken seriously by the general public. His presentation was deemed too abrasive. He was convicted of obscenity in 1964 and legally hounded until his death. It is only now, decades later, that he's been pardoned by Gov. Pataki on the grounds that his conviction was politically motivated. In any case, the political points Lenny Bruce raised were often overlooked because people couldn't get past his sarcastic tone. Do you worry if the dirt you've dug up on Bush and others is being ignored by the mainstream American news media because your writing style also blends the facts with a similarly bitter and sarcastic sense of humor? Does the sad case of Lenny Bruce teach us that injecting humor into a serious issue is an impediment to the process of truth-telling? Why do you think the hard cold facts you've uncovered aren't damning enough to stand on their own? *Publisher's Weekly*, for example wrote of your book, "Palast's bombastic style and one-sided perspective do much to undermine his own credibility." How do you feel about that?

Greg: Actually, I studied Lenny Bruce's

delivery (and my friend Dick Gregory's) before I spoke. I think the American mainstream media, as Russell Baker once said, confuses "serious" and "solemn." When George Bush lands on an aircraft carrier and runs around in an outfit that makes him look like the first chimp in space, and then Tom Brokaw intones about presidential leadership, that's solemn, but it's not serious—it's a farce. In Britain, I've been called "the most important investigative reporter of our time," and I work for the most serious show on the planet: BBC Television's *Newsnight*. But I'm allowed by BBC to broadcast the weird humor of these tales. BBC's not solemn, but it's serious.

AB: You strike me as a man with a deep sense of moral outrage regarding the issues you tackle, such as voter fraud, the WTO, the Iraq war, corporate American conglomerates, and the mainstream news media. Would you describe yourself as a moralist?

Greg: No. Pat Robertson is a moralist. Your morals are *your* problem, or your mother's problem. I'm a "truth-ist" I'm fanatically concerned with unburying the truth.

AB: You've recently uncovered yet another bombshell. This one is a James Baker shocker. He boasted to an audience of important Russians that it was he who came up with the bright idea to allow the Supreme Court to appoint Bush as president. Baker is also pulling the strings to turn over billions of dollars of Iraq's assets to Saudi Arabia. You expressed your concern about how it may very well turn out to be yet another roundabout method to create cash flow to terrorists who vow to destroy us. Please offer a few more words about this, because I'm a little confused. Saudi Arabia loaned money to Iraq to build an atomic weapon nicknamed "The Islamic Bomb." When Saddam couldn't do it, he routed the Saudi money over to Pakistan. Pakistan did use it to build the "Islamic Bomb." So how can James Baker and the Saudi Royal Family legitimately claim that Iraq still has to pay back that money?

Greg: Because these are greedy, sick, dangerous loan sharks who demand their money and they don't need to explain it to you, Jack. Saudi Royals are vicious potentates who don't care about no damn electorate. Jim Baker is a vicious consultant to potentates who doesn't care about no damn electorate.

Now that I've gotten that off my chest, here's the core: Saudi Arabia put up the big cash for Saddam to build a bomb—with a wink and a nod from the USA. You didn't read that in the US press, but you get it in my book or on this tape...it's a story I did for England's top paper, *The Guardian*. In 1990, Saddam went renegade on Bush and the Saudis by seizing Kuwait (and thereby aiming to control more oil reserves than the Saudis, a no-no). So, Bush and the Saudis cut off his nuclear funds air supply, moved the cash to Pakistan (which successfully completed and tested the "Islamic Bomb"), and now the Saudis want their money back from the poor Iraqis. You got a problem wid dat?

AB: Of all the atrocities documented in your book, I was stunned at which one inspired a lawsuit against you. It came not from the many right wing Conservative Republicans that you exposed, but from liberal Democrat, Gov. Mario Cuomo. I reread the rather small passage in question from your book. It pertains to a federal judge named Jack Weinstein. He threw out a jury's verdict demanding LILCO to pay back $4.8 billion dollars for the crime of civil racketeering. The supposedly "offensive" remark you wrote states nothing except that the judge happened to make his decision to throw out the verdict after receiving a phone call from Mario Cuomo. People who know your reputation for writing only what's been authenticated in documented evidence are perplexed about how anyone would be daring enough sue you and have all that documented evidence paraded before a court. What's most disconcerting is that Cuomo, who knows the law so well, would do this to you. What do you have to say about it?

Greg: I was the key government investigator and witness in a civil (not criminal) racketeering case. The public was overcharged billions by this crooked electric company—that was my conclusion for the government. After the jury agrees with me, Cuomo calls the court through an intermediary. By the way, that's perfectly legal, but what Cuomo did in this particular case stinks. This is not a story I merely reported, but rather a story I lived. Now Cuomo wants to rewrite history: he either called or he didn't.

The real issue is my right to report it. As a big name in Constitutional law told me, "Mario has a real problem with the First Amendment."

My other issue is this. George Bush Sr.'s former gold mining cronies sued my paper over my report on them. I wouldn't back down. I can't say I'll target Republicans then give Democrats like Cuomo a pass. Once reporters start choosing partisan favorites, we lose our integrity. Let me state for the record that I supported Cuomo's campaigns (this was before I was a journalist), but I can't keep silent.

AB: The CEO of Hewlett-Packard, Carly Fiorina, defended laying off her American employees and moving their jobs overseas by saying; "There is no job that is America's God-given right anymore." What do you think is signified by this new boldness of American corporations who proudly declare that they intend to increase American unemployment?

Greg: As to Carly: hey, they used to *burn* witches, now they give 'em stock options. The new "screw you" attitude in US corporations is actually the return of the old "screw you" attitude of a century earlier. It just means it's time for a new working class movement.

AB: Most of the nation seemed shocked that Al Gore endorsed Gov. Dean instead of Joe Leiberman. Were you?

Greg: I'm never shocked when one rich white kid endorses another rich white kid.

AB: I happened to encounter Al Gore on a flight to Nashville. I had just begun reading *The Best Democracy Money Can Buy*. I had not yet finished the first chapter, yet what I'd read up to that point made my blood boil. I was enraged by the audacity of George W. Bush, his brother Jeb Bush, and Sec. Katherine Harris for deliberately committing voter fraud, and getting away with it in gloating smugness. I was so filled with outrage that when I happened to see Al Gore I could not help but thrust your book in his face and angrily say, "Look what I'm reading!" He responded, "Ah. That's heavy stuff. Too bad he's English." I told him you weren't English, that you were American. But he told me he thought you were English because you wrote for *The Guardian*. What still bothers me to this day about my encounter with Al Gore is that he was denied his rightful place in the White House because of voter fraud. It is fraud that you exposed. Even if you had been English, what difference would that have made? Isn't the truth still the truth no matter what the nationality of the reporter is?

Greg: He was pulling your leg, mate. The White House gang knew me well (though...and this may have been a little inside joke...as the guy Tony Blair despised).

AB: I think you've written a lot of shocking truths that would sink George W. Bush's "approval rating" to zero if they were being widely reported in newspapers and broadcast on television. Yet no one dares. I think if I were you, I'd feel despondent that all my hard work should have so little impact. It would instill in me some deeply resentful feelings of dissatisfaction. Why be a muckraker? Why publish exposés?

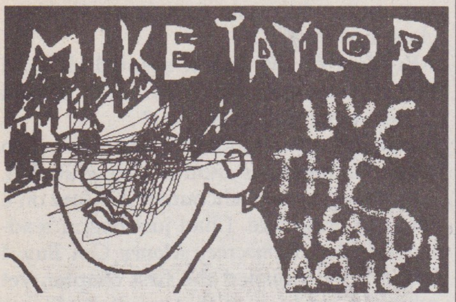
Greg: Two questions here. Am I despondent that my work doesn't have more coverage and impact? Yes, but not for myself: I worry about the victims I write about: the Tanzanian miners, the Bolivian water workers, African Americans shafted out of their vote. On the other hand, the word is creeping out whether the Powers That Be like it or not.

Why be a muckraker? Answer: I don't have a choice; if I didn't publish the information that comes my way, my head would explode.

***The Best Democracy Money Can Buy* is a Plume Book, published by Penguin Group (USA) Inc.**

Weapon Of Mass Instruction: Live is available through his website.

Make sure you visit www.greg-palast.com



I'm gonna level with you: sometimes life preempts art. You know this fact and it's disappointed you in the form of presidential addresses, televised sports broadcasts, earthquakes, and fallen buildings. It's just been a really fucked up month, for reasons that will be articulated in finer detail by my friends Ann and Jess in another part of the magazine. Suffice to say that although we know that all of our secrets and enclaves and little bits of security that we procure through a myriad of channels are fleeting, it's always a tremendous blow to watch the anvils fall; being that we live in a culture dictated by the pursuit of capital operating in the language of politics, the anvils will fall on the disenfranchised time and time again. We'll get fired, our pets will get hit by cars, our favorite snack foods will be discontinued by the FDA, and we'll get evicted. But with the options being narrow and unattractive, I guess I'll keep at it.

Thanks to everybody who wrote about the last column. I still mean it.

Write: PO Box 28336, Providence, RI 02908 USA.

Endnotes:

Top ten for '04 thus far:

1. Yukhonic, 2. What's Yr Damage, 3. Hepatitis Youth, 4. Halves and Thirds, 5. et al, live and in theory, 6. Extreme Animals, live, 7. Lungfish, *Love is Love* 8. Khanate, all, 9. Kara Walker, 10. Olneyville, USA: the people, not the government.

Super!

"We are the champions, no time for losers..." Ah, I love it!!

Of all things, last Sunday I was drinking beer and watching football. Ha!

But not just any football—the 2004 Super Bowl. Played in Houston in the mighty "Super Dome." (Is this the home of Super Man, with Super Dog, and his Super Size Fries?) I was even eating vegan ribs, getting barbeque sauce all over my hands and yelling jokes at the television.

But hey, the Patriots won! And we have endless terrible renditions of "We Are the Champions" to prove it!

I'm not a big football fan, but if you lived or worked in Boston, you were hit in the head by "GO PATS!!" It was written on everything—replacing bus destinations in digital letters, written in chalk on every single pub and bar sign, scribbled on cardboard and taped up in small store windows, even printed on a hundred foot banner hanging in front of the state house (our taxes at work). Ah, the ridiculousness and fun of pro-football!

I even went to a "Super Bowl Party" last Sunday. My friend Ian invited us all over and made tons and tons of food—there were chips and dips and beers and even veggie crudités—and I had nothing better to do. So how could I turn down friends, food, and fun? (Used without permission from McDonald's Inc.) The BBC stated the Super Bowl was the most-highly watched entertainment event in the world. How could a billion people be wrong?

A bunch of us crammed into Ian's small living room and turned on his big TV with the little detached speakers. As Adam said, "as the ball advanced, so did our cheers and our beers and our guts full of food!" I had potato chip grease on my hands and was working through a strong pint-sized gin and tonic while waiting for someone to score.

Like most Americans, I ate myself silly while watching two teams of men run at top speed, smashing into each other. How strange and ironic. A man is being taken off the field, the medics are coming—pass the chips and give me another beer! It was interesting, I'll give the game that, as it was all real-life-televised-from-sixteen-angles-bone-crushing drama. I didn't even have to get up except to get more beer off the porch and take a piss.

We laughed every time the camera showed the Patriot's owner, Bob Kraft, sitting in the high seats, wearing a suit and clapping demurely while wearing enormous ornate cufflinks. What a fat rich man! What a caricature of the greedy capitalist! Sitting in the top seats. Making money on cheap food, football, and cigarettes.

Ah. Then, there are the commercials.

The most expensive commercial television time in history. Try to imagine this: General Motors bought two 60-second commercials at $4 million each. That's $66,666.66 a second! Bizarre.

But that's peanuts. Pepsi spent $13.5 million on commercial time, and Anheuser-Busch (who has already cornered the market on tasteless swill beer, why a need to advertise?) shelled out the most advertising dollars this year, reaching $22.5 million in ad time.

Perhaps you saw the ads and laughed like we did. If not, let me put down my drink and point out a few obvious things here.

Well, what stuck out in my mind, or rather rose to the occasion, was that the NFL Super Bowl was sponsored this year by two erectile dysfunction drugs, Levitra and Cialis. It makes business sense, as the erectile dysfunction market has grown to a $3 billion a year industry, or so I read. Just think of all of the money being made on limp dicks! Amazing!

Cialis, owned by the pharmaceutical giant Eli Lilly, was sold during its commercial as a way for men to "still stay in the game." While Viagra lasts for about four hours, Cialis can possibly last for 36 to 48 hours, according to MedWeb.com. Holy smokes! That's some game!

Another commercial suggested umpires learned to endure being yelled at by screaming players, by their daily experience of being yelled at by their screaming wives. I'm not sure what that ad was selling.

Hmmm. Ads featuring old white men. Some can't get it up; some hate their wives. The world is filled with expensive cars and lots of cheap beer.

Then, there are the ads that you didn't see.

CBS, which broadcasted the game, rejected ads from MoveOn.org and PETA. A statement read, "The network felt the ads from the political action groups were inappropriate for the Super Bowl."

Have you seen the "30 seconds of Bush" commercials on MoveOn.org? They are hilarious (in a sick and twisted sort of way, considering the Bush agenda of hate and fear). Over a thousand people sent in video clips, and people voted on the best twenty ads. Check them out. They are even worth the download time waiting for video. I played a few on the Roach Motel last week.

"Inappropriate," my ass.

And then–there is the half-time show! Bring out the cheerleaders and the brass bands! Oops, I mean the corporate MTV rock stars and synch dancers...

In the event that will be remembered long after the final score, Janet Jackson *almost* showed a naked breast. And everyone had a fit!

Justin Timberlake (known for dating Britney, wears khaki pants) tore Janet's shirt open at the end of their song together, revealing some of Janet's right breast, for about a quarter of a second. I saw it live, and sure, it was surprising!

But, shocking? Lewd? An assault on American families? C'mon! Get a grip!

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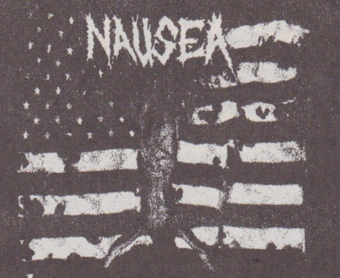

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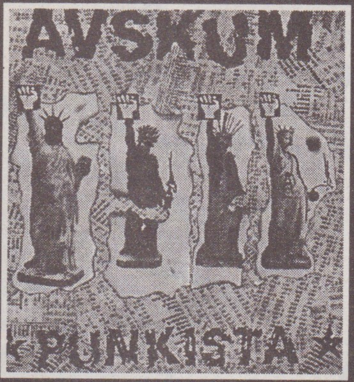

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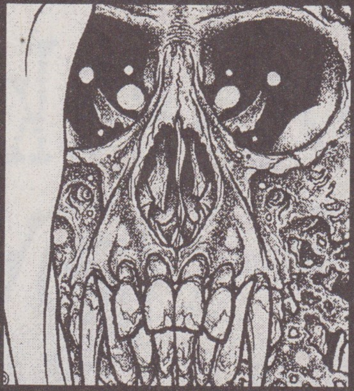

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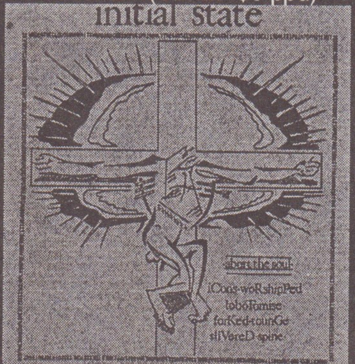

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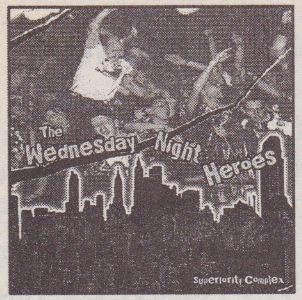

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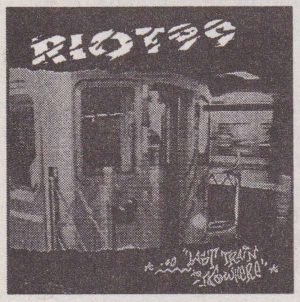

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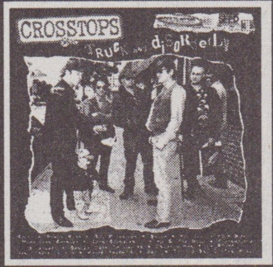

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If we lived in a different world, one not run from the male perspective, it would have been the *ads* called "shocking" by the media.

Look at what the ads were selling. One side effect of the erectile dysfunction drug advertised was, "If erection lasts for more than four hours, immediately seek medical attention." Yikes!! And yet it is common for men to have an erection for over 20 hours while on this drug. That can't be good for you!

This is an example of how a patriarchal culture can also target men in harmful ways. Men are given the message that having an erection is an essence of being a "real man." Even if he is old as dirt! An erection is more important than health! Or even life itself!

There is ton of evidence that these hard-dick drugs are dangerous to men, as the side effects are serious, ranging from indigestion and headaches to lethal heart attacks.

Meanwhile, Janet was attacked by the US press for revealing a bit of breast. Go figure. Maybe the NFL wants to keep its monopoly on erections. Keep them drug-subsidized!

Ah, the Super Bowl, like US pop culture in general, is both sickening and funny.

The game was close, the teams ran around and passed the football…and the Patriots won by three points in the last few seconds of the game!

"We arrre the winnnners, theey are the losssers…!" All of us were packed onto Ian's second story porch in lower Allston, yelling down to the street. It was -2 Celsius (according to the bank sign across the street) but people were running down the sidewalk screaming, and we watched two girls run around the block banging on kitchen pots. We yelled at cars going by and they flashed their lights and honked at us. It was a rare moment of citywide Boston solidarity!

When I got home around midnight, I knew we had to turn on the TV to see what was on fire. And there it was–a helicopter view of hundreds of people gathered in Kenmore Square, dancing around two fires built in the middle of the street! People were dancing around the fires and throwing more wood on, before the cops broke it up about ten minutes later.

Hell ya! Way to take back the streets!

For…um…football? Beer? Tom Brady?

What I want to know is, "Where are the fires started under the rich man's shoes?"

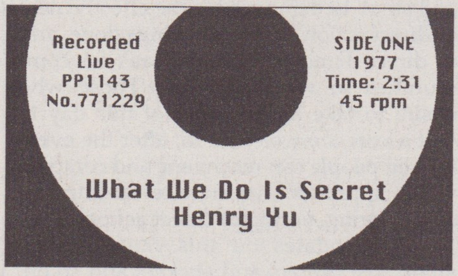
GO PATS!!

Ransom Notes Notes

This month I'm running around, trying to finish up the Profits new 7," *US Atrocity,* that will be out by the time you read this. We're putting it out ourselves, which is glorious and DIY as hell, but also a bit of work. If you want to help with distribution, or want to trade, get in touch! Thanks to Rodent Popsicle and Profane for helping out and adding it to their distros.

Also, I'm working on booking the Profits first tour to Europe! I'm excited as hell. We plan to go at the end of September. If you want to help us with shows, please get in touch as we could use the help and a friendly face. We are also working with Active Distribution from the UK to put out a CD discography of the Profits 1998-2003. This will rock! It is hard to believe it is the Profit's fifth anniversary of being together. Cheers and love to everyone who has ever helped us out. You know who you are!

OK, Mike just called and wondered where my column is. I have to go! More rants next month. Contact me: Erika Ransom, PO Box 391273, Cambridge, MA 02139, USA. ransom@theprofits.org. Up the punks!



May The Circle Remain Unbroken

The road from burlap to gabardine to velveteen to latex and nylon and whips and furs and chains in the back is paved with new contortions. The San Francisco band APOCALIPSTICK recently came into our consciousness (www.apocalipstick.us), bringing us out of our winter cocooning tendencies to Gilman Street. A show of magnanimous proportions ensued. Immediately upon taking the stage, panties began flying, KC/DC's guitar began to wail and frontwoman and sometime dominatrix Jackie O Nasstie began ranting while Gina Lala Bitchatya gyrated a la BUTTHOLE SURFERS concept of go-go dancers on stage. Nasstie's depraved lyrics were complemented by KC/DC's glam punk musical stylings. Songs like "Rectal Inspector" and "Lick" served to infuriate and entertain, tho our favorite was "Whoop-Ti-Doo," an infectious shout-ed rant in a twisted nursery rhymey delivery: "Whoop-Ti-Doo / I thought I saw you kissing Sue / I'm gonna have to kill you." They closed their set with a rousing "Sonic Reducer." KC/DC's lineage goes back to the Tim Yo *MRR* days as a teenage scene reporter, so this man knows how to rock.

Bazoom Records has released the first APOCALIPSTICK EP called *Apocalipstick Now,* the cover of which spoofs the *Apocalypse Now* movie poster. A six-pack of your favorites. The energy comes through and you can pick up all the lyrics you missed in the live show. Check out their website for details on how to order it. KC/DC aka KC Wilder is also a writer and poet whose tome *Flying Under The Radar* was released in late 2003. Read the review in the book reviews section.

Yankee Doodle Dandees

Keith Grave's punk vault continues to grind out sonic assault from the Yankee Doodle state. While the LA-based Dionysus label has been the vehicle for his recent releases, this time around Australia's Coldsweat Records (www.coldsweatrecords.com) plays host to Keith's latest project. Titled *3-Way Split: Hardcore From The Early Days,* this is a posthumous comp of three Connecticut bands from hardcore's heyday, the early 80s: TARGET CELLS, WHITE PIGS, and CHRONIC DISORDER.

TARGET CELLS lasted only about a year, and only released a cassette tape called *Cerebral Hemorrhage,* which only sold 25 copies, which is waaaay too fuckin' bad 'cos these guys scorched. Simple, brutish lyrics over a metal punk veneer. Occasionally they drown in the usual anti's of the day (anti-bomb anti-cop, anti-capitalism), but it's their nihilistic, introspective self-loathing stuff that finds a home to these ears, such as the FLIPPER-esque rant of "Matter" ("I hate matter / I hate everything else / I hate matter / Most of all I hate myself"). This is vital and hooky at the same time. WHITE PIGS on the other hand, lasted a handfulla years and managed to put out quite a few releases. Their music falls squarely in the HC camp, staunchly 4-4 in their delivery, with the lyrics to match.

CHRONIC DISORDER (www.chronicdisorder.net) cop a faux brit accent infused with the occasional Jello Biafra warble, coupled with really tight fast playing to thrilling effect. Urgent and literate. They dare to go against the HC grain. "SIWOV (self-indulgent waste of vinyl)" captures this ("I heard your song about the bomb / I heard you say don't drop the bomb / Hey it's just a fuckin" song"). Great band. Kudo's to Keith and Coldsweat for putting together a great comp. On both CD and very limited vinyl pressing of 500, this is essential for the HC fan and a great listen for any dog-fearing punk.

Long Walk Off a Short Pier

Three more releases on Pier's Rave Up label after a few months off for the holidays.

No records were ever released by THE PUNKS, but these long hairs were probably contemporaries of THE SONICS RENDEZVOUS BAND back in the day, given their Detroit upbringing and circa (1976-ish), and most definitely unabashed STOOGES fans and devotees. Despite the

unimaginative name they really weren't punk at all, but come from a late 60s hard rock heavy jam background. Later they did change their name (to "THE END"), ironically to avoid the media hype at the time surrounding punk, so philosophically, they were true punks! Anyhow, fans of hard rock, MC5, SONICS RENDEZVOUS, and STOOGES will like this tuff rock comp. More info, plus their interview with *Creem* magazine back in the day, can be found on the website www.motorcity-jams.com.

THE REALTORS spent very little of their band history by that name, quickly reverting back to their previous name JJ180 after the fucking Bay Area realtor scum tried to run them outta town. However, they managed to record one great 7" under that name, leading to ultimate discovery by the KBD detectives. The *Buy or Beware* EP, as well as all of their previously released comp tracks as JJ180, are presented here in the form of alternate mixes. While "Guilt By Association" finds them at their most aggressive punk stance, other songs show their other influences, quirky new wave, surf, 60s garage, even electronics. Their eclecticism probably had to do with being from the Santa Cruz area as well as their love of various types of rock of the era preceding. While this may turn off the uninitiated hardcore punker, Homework types of the $27 Snap On Face school will be rewarded. Awesome liner notes and information about every track and cool photos.

LA's SHOCK were skinny tie'd, poofy-haired, leather clad power pop new waver white boys who managed a coupla 45s in their day, that being 1978, plus or minus. "This Generation's On Vacation," their best known anthem, lends its name to this Rave Up collection. Side A contains all the released songs, including my personal favorite, "We Were That Noise"—tho the title track is clearly the classic. Hard power pop with punk underpinnings. Side B gives us a half dozen never-before released tracks (tho some of which may have seen prior light of day on the SHOCK/SILENCERS split CD compilation on Wankin' Stiffs). Several are as good as anything that was originally released, "There's Danger" and "Now That We're Blessed" being standouts, with lotsa hooks to pull you in. Though bass player Steve Reina's liner notes coulda used some beefin', this is overall a worthy release.

Expect another big year for Pier's Rave Up label, with bands such as LA PESTE, CLASSIC RUINS, SHIT DOGS coming up in April, and STAINS, TOT ROCKET, TOXIN III by mid-year…

It Happened But Nobody Noticed

Henry, 601 4th St. #114, San Francisco, CA 94107. terasearch@yahoo.com. OK?

CrimethInc. Workers' Collective Bullet-in

Nation-wide Call to Action: Don't Just Vote, Get Active!

We are calling for a national campaign, in every town, neighborhood, and countryside, to take advantage of this election year to emphasize the power of direct action and direct democracy. This campaign will include postering, stickering, and other forms of urban and suburban redecorating, as well as massive literature distribution, street demonstrations, and similar community outreach. It will culminate in a nation-wide day of direct action on election day.

On this day, people across the country will come together in groups both large and small to demonstrate the effectiveness of direct action in getting things done, and of direct democracy as a means for communities to work together. Those who desire to take an hour out of this day to cast a vote are welcome to; after the event is over, people can reconvene and compare which approach was more rewarding and empowering, voting or direct action.

For updates on this campaign, to attain free posters and stickers and so on, or to offer your assistance, contact us at CrimethInc. Ex-Constituents' Collective, PO Box 2133, Greensboro, NC 27402 USA, or "visit" www.crimethinc.com.

Why This Campaign?

Elections in this country are the reddest of red herrings. Liberals have been so fixated upon them as to forget most other means of applying power; losses in elections have demoralized and disempowered the left in general. Anti-authoritarians, on the other hand, while claiming not to recognize the sovereignty of any officials, elected or not, have nonetheless developed their own mythology around voting, attributing to it the mystical power to "legitimize" authority figures thus elected. But it is not voting that gives power to politicians, just as it is not not-voting that could take it away from them; they have power because we place our power in their hands, because we fail to apply it deliberately ourselves.

Quite a bit of energy is squandered by liberals and radicals debating the old question of whether or not to vote; the answer, of course, is that it's the wrong question. For people to be able to focus on getting power back in their hands, the terms themselves have to be set anew. To sidestep the entire issue of voting, and instead focus all attention on the alternative ways to apply power, can save everyone a lot of wasted energy, and unlock vast potential.

As a national campaign, this has strengths going for it that few others do. First of all, it addresses a subject that is already foremost in the public mind. By refusing to take a stand on the false dichotomy presented by the media, or even the other false dichotomy presented by traditional radicalism or apathy, it evades thoughtless dismissals. A campaign that declines to take sides but instead raises entirely new questions can be provocative without being alienating.

Second of all, it's both global and local. We don't have to try to get all concerned activists to come to one city to demonstrate around this issue; on the contrary, this is a perfect opportunity for people to act where they live, while feeling connected to a nationwide campaign.

Third, the broadness of the general theme—direct action itself—is such that participation is open to anyone, with any preferred brand of tactics, at any desired level of engagement or risk. This is a campaign that your chapter of Food Not Bombs, cells of the Environmental Liberation Front, and your grandmother's knitting circle can all participate in. As with direct action and direct democracy in general, and in stark contrast to electoral politics, harmony is the only goal that must be sought between participants; unity, on the other hand, is unnecessary and irrelevant.

Election day will be a flash point for many concerns and desires this year. Afterwards, we can be sure that people will retire from civic engagement in despair or relief—unless they've had a positive experience to remind them how much more they can do outside electoral politics. This is an opportunity we must not miss.

Join us, with your friends and neighbors, in whatever ways you see fit, in emphasizing the power people have outside electoral politics! No more "shut up and vote"—let's get active!

Voting Vs. Direct Action

People in the United States are preoccupied with voting to an unhealthy degree. This is not to say that everyone votes, or regards voting as effective or worthwhile; on the contrary, a smaller and smaller proportion of the eligible population votes every election year, and that's not just because more and more people are in prison. But when you broach the question of politics, of having a say in the way things are, voting is just about the only strategy anyone can think of—voting, and campaigning for others' votes.

Could it be this is why so many people feel so disempowered? Is anonymously checking a box once a year, or every four years, enough to feel included in the political process, let alone play a role in it? But what is there besides voting?

In fact, voting for people to represent your interests is the *least* efficient and effective means of applying political power. The alternative, broadly speaking, is acting directly to represent your interests yourself.

This is known in some circles as "direct action." Direct action is occasionally misunderstood to mean another kind of campaigning, lobbying for influence on elected officials by means of political activist tactics; but it properly refers to any action or strategy that cuts out the middle man and solves problems directly, without appealing to elected representatives, corporate interests, or other powers.

Concrete examples of direct action are everywhere. When people start their own organization to share food with hungry folks, instead of just voting for a candidate who promises to solve "the homeless problem" with tax dollars and bureaucracy, that's direct action. When a man makes and gives out fliers addressing an issue that concerns him, rather than counting on the newspapers to cover it or print his letters to the editor, that's direct action. When a woman forms a book club with her friends instead of paying to take classes at a school, or does what it takes to shut down an unwanted corporate superstore in her neighborhood herself rather than deferring to the authority of city planners, that's direct action, too. Direct action is the foundation of the old-fashioned can-do American ethic, hands-on and no-nonsense. Without it, hardly anything would get done.

In a lot of ways, direct action is a more effective means for people to have a say in society than voting is. For one thing, voting is a lottery—if a candidate doesn't get elected, then all the energy his constituency put into supporting him is wasted, as the power they were hoping he would exercise for them goes to someone else. With direct action, you can be sure that your work will offer some kind of results; and the resources you develop in the process, whether those be experience, contacts and recognition in your community, or organizational infrastructure, cannot be taken away from you.

Voting consolidates the power of a whole society in the hands of a few individuals; through force of sheer habit, not to speak of other methods of enforcement, everyone else is kept in a position of dependence. Through direct action, you become familiar with your own resources and capabilities and initiative, discovering what these are and how much you can accomplish.

Voting forces everyone in a movement to try to agree on one platform; coalitions fight over what compromises to make, each faction insists that they know the best way and the others are messing everything up by not going along with their program. A lot of energy gets wasted in these disputes and recriminations. In direct action, on the other hand, no vast consensus is necessary: different groups can apply different approaches according to what they believe in and feel comfortable doing, which can still interact to form a mutually beneficial whole. People involved in different direct actions have no need to squabble, unless they really are seeking conflicting goals (or years of voting have taught them to fight with anyone who doesn't think exactly as they do). Conflicts over voting often distract from the real issues at hand, as people get caught up in the drama of one party against another, one candidate against another, one agenda against another. With direct action, on the other hand, the issues themselves are raised, addressed specifically, and often resolved.

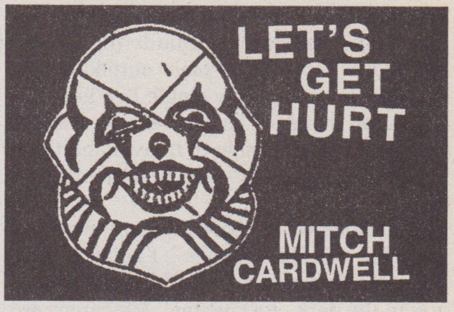
Voting is only possible when election time comes around. Direct action can be applied whenever one sees fit. Voting is only useful for addressing whatever topics are current in the political agendas of candidates, while direct action can be applied in every aspect of your life, in every part of the world you live in.

Voting is glorified as "freedom" in action. It's not freedom—freedom is getting to decide what the choices are in the first place, not picking between Pepsi and Coca-Cola. Direct action is the real thing. You make the plan, you create the options, the sky's the limit.

Ultimately, there's no reason the strategies of voting and direct action can't both be applied together. One does not cancel the other out. The problem is that so many people think of voting as their primary way of exerting political and social power that a disproportionate amount of everyone's time and energy is spent deliberating and debating how they should vote while other opportunities to make change go to waste. For months and months preceding every election, everyone argues about the voting issue, what candidates to vote for or whether to vote at all, when voting itself takes less than an hour. Vote or don't, but get on with it! Remember how many other ways you can make your voice heard.

This being an election year, we hear constantly about the options available to us as voters, and almost nothing about our other opportunities to play a decisive role in our society. What we need is a campaign to emphasize the possibilities more direct means of action and community involvement have to offer. These need not be seen as in contradiction with voting. We can spend an hour voting once a year, and the other three hundred sixty four days and twenty three hours acting directly!

Those who are totally disenchanted with representative democracy, who dream of a world without presidents and politicians, can rest assured that if we all learn how to apply deliberately the power that each of us has, the question of which politician is elected to office will become a moot point. They only have that power because we delegate it to them! A campaign for direct action puts power back where it belongs, in the hands of the people from whom it originates.



It appears that the drought of new releases has carried over into February, so it's slim pickings for two months in a row. I guess I'll just have to be extra obnoxious this month in order to meet the column length requirements. You should stop reading now.

I'd like to start with a record that I have been waiting upwards of 5 years for. Sometime in 1999, RYAN WONG released a 7"EP by his synth-punk project, DESTRUCTION UNIT. That EP, entitled *My Disease*, essentially sparked the current synth-punk revival, along with the first LOST SOUNDS 7"EP and a handful of others. In the years that followed the release of *My Disease*, Ryan found himself playing and touring with a number of different bands (PEEPS, Lost Sounds, DIGITAL LEATHER and his on-again-off-again Rip Off Records combo, THE WONGS), but I always wanted more Destruction Unit. In *Self Destruction Of A Man*, Ryan and Empty Records have answered my prayers...in LP format no less! On this new LP, Ryan has teamed up with Jay Reatard and Alicja Trout (co-conspirators of his since the delinquent heyday of THE REATARDS), and the results are very similar to The Lost Sounds' finest moments. What sets the record apart is that Ryan's mood doesn't appear to have changed much from his early *Teenage Hate* days. He's a little older, but a lot more pissed off. From the ferocity of tunes like "Let's Lie" to the Speak'N'Spell™ samples ("Fuck You...Fuck You...Fuck You..."), this LP gets my absolute highest recommendation.

If you're a regular reader of this column, you've already heard about my obsessive love of Japanese punk rock. In the case of my latest find, I was able to avoid ridiculous shipping charges and questionable web translators. I found THE SLOWMOTIONS by merely thumbing through the record bins! SCORE! Japanese readers will have to forgive any mistakes in my translation, but "Make Love" b/w "Yes, Future!!" is a true killer. After one lis-

ten to this, their fourth single, it became increasingly clear that if I didn't find the other 3, I'd probably have to kill myself. Released on the H.G. Fact label, my assumption was that The Slowmotions would blur the line between Japanese punk/garage and hardcore, much like JELLYROLL ROCKHEADS or THE SPROUTS. I couldn't have been more wrong: this single sounds like the most thundering REGISTRATORS *Terminal Boredom* outtakes. It's the most booming, raw single I've heard of out Japan in ages! The fact that it made it over here is a good sign of its availability, so I would start your search immediately! Fuck!

I'm ashamed of myself for not mentioning THE SIRENS sooner. I've had their debut single for months and have left all of you in the dark...forgive me! The Sirens are an all-girl outfit out of Detroit that features the fantastic vocals of one MUFFY KROHA, the sister of Dan Kroha (THE GORIES and DEMOLITION DOLL RODS)! The other girls have done time in notable bands like THE COME ONS, DIRTBOMBS and GORE GORE GIRLS! While that was enough to get me to investigate their *S/T* debut 7"EP, released on France's Wiped Out Records, I must say that I got something way better than I expected. The Sirens introduce themselves with a single comprised entirely of covers, which is usually a turn-off for me. However, when the bands covered are HOLLYWOOD BRATS ("Chez Maximes"), SUZI QUATRO ("Glycerine Queen") and SLADE ("Gudby T' Jane"), what's not to love? All three are dead-on and probably pretty revealing in terms of what we can expect from their originals. I believe there is an album coming sometime this year on Get Hip, so keep an eye out.

No New York. Yes L.A. Maybe Chicago? That is the question being asked by Criminal IQ and Protomersh Records. *Maybe Chicago?* is a CD compilation showcasing the highlights of Chi-Town's recent rise in punky activity. Naturally, it features the scene's heavy hitters (FUNTIONAL BLACKOUTS, PONYS, TYRADES, BASEBALL FURIES), but it's the newer bands that really make this comp exciting. The installments from VEE DEE, THE DIRGES, and THE HOT MACHINES have me thinking that 2004 will see many fantastic debut releases out of these bands. Get a head start with this comp. Speaking of The Hot Machines, MISS ALEX WHITE & CHRIS PLAYBOY have their debut 7"EP out now on Missile X. This concludes this month's hyping of Chicago. Back to our regularly-scheduled stupidity...

It's all beer-soaked fishnets and strychnine lip-gloss for THE WINKS, an all-tough-girl combo out of Austin, Texas. This band has been on the radar for quite a while now, due mainly to the appearance of DIRTY SWEETS' vocalist Penny Tration on guitar. Naturally, you can expect some bad attitude punk rock similar to DEADLY WEAPONS or LOLI AND THE CHONES. Their debut 7"EP on Super Secret Records, *Spoil Me*, features all the sweet snarl your expecting. They are after your hearts, wallets and booze...watch out!

All-star Swedish combo TOKYO KNIVES have another 7"EP! For the billionth time, Tokyo Knives feature folks from HENRY FIAT'S OPEN SORE and THE BLACKS. The focal point of the group, and especially this new single, is MARTIN SAVAGE. *Young Punk Saturday Night*, split-released by the Gonna Puke and Boogaloosa labels, features 3 tunes penned by Martin: one for Tokyo Knives and two from a couple of his other bands, KAMEN RIDERS and CHINGALEROS. If you passed on their first two singles, you definitely don't wanna miss this one.

Readers of this column will no doubt recognize THE ORPHANS from their 2 great singles (one self-released and one on Kapow!) and their appearance on *Let's Get Rid Of L.A.* Well, the Dangerhouse-fueled assault continues with their debut LP, *Everybody Loves You When You're Dead*, released on Unity Squad Records. As over-the-top and wild as their live shows tend to be, there is no mistaking this band's knack from creating catchy bursts of aggression.

As we retreat into noise from the past, it's only natural to report on, for better or worse, the latest reissues from Rave-Up Records. As if they didn't already have enough to work with, they've launched yet another reissue series: "American High Energy '70s Rock'N'Roll". The first installment is from THE PUNKS, an unknown Detroit "High Energy" band from 1976, a band with a sound clearly comparable and influenced by the giants of their time and location, most notably THE STOOGES and SONIC'S RENDEZVOUS BAND. I don't know what else Rave-Up has planned for this new series, but this first installment shows promise.

The only thing I know about HEADBANGERS is that they were a band from Bremen, Germany from 1978-1980, which is pretty easy to infer from their 7"EP reissue on Phonomenal, *Headbangers: Aufgenommen 1978 In Bremen.* This limited import cost me a pretty penny, but fuck...it was worth it. I have no idea what they are saying, but this *Killed By Death* keyboard-punk is the international language of drunk. For all you losers who think you have everything, try this on for size.

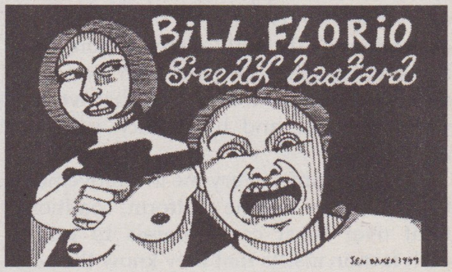
Fans of the *Powerpearls* compilation series might recognize MANDARINES, a Swedish cutie-pie power pop band from 1978. "Trust You" was featured on *Powerpearls Vol.8*, but someone went a head and booted the entire *Trust You* 7"EP, which was the band's second EP (I believe). You know the drill: if you dig the comped tune and are craving more, hunt this down. Be prepared for a pretty steep price tag though...

I'm a bit reluctant to dish what I consider to be this month's top two reissues because they are both CD-only releases. Am I wrong in assuming that 9 out of 10 people interested in METAL URBAIN or THE HOMOSEXUALS reissues would favor a vinyl retrospective package rather than a CD? Am I the only fucking asshole left on planet Earth? Come on man! If you are gonna do shit like this, do it fucking right! Oh well, at least great material like is available again.

Metal Urbain's *Anarchy In Paris!* reissue is brought to us by Acute Records. Aside from it being CD-only, it's a perfect package: 24 tunes (many previously unreleased, 72 minutes of material) and great liners that basically condense the two-part feature *Ugly Things* did on them a while back. Definitely one of the best French punk bands (if not the best all together), Metal Urbain's influence can be clearly seen in the recent work of NAZIS FROM MARS, LILI Z. and VOLT, not to mention the electronic/synth punk explosion we are currently engulfed in. By the time this issue hits stands, they will have stampeded the U.S. in their first-ever tour. I'd expect to see coverage of this trip (as well as this reissue) in the "big time" music press, but that shouldn't sway you from checking them out.

Expert proto and post reissue house, Morphius Archives, has pleased nearly every horn-rimmed record geek by releasing *The Homosexuals' CD*, a 21-song overview of one of England's most prolific and legendary D.I.Y. art-punk bands. If you are a fan of WARSAW, THE FALL, TELEVISION PERSONALITIES or Hyped2Death's *Messthetics* series and *haven't* heard The Homosexuals, you are about to have your world turned upside down. Songs like "My Night Out" and "Neutron Lover" are arguably some of the finest of the era (1978) and simply need to be heard. This Morphius reissue marks the official start of the upcoming wave of Homosexuals reissues. Expect a box-set (!!!) from Hyped2Death in the next couple of months!

I think we'll end it on that note. I'm already biting my nails! Enjoy yourselves! Actually, don't. Fuck off instead. Mitch Cardwell, letsgethurt@yahoo.com> P.O. Box 23882, Oakland, CA 94623 U.S.A.



So The Shemps west coast tour 2004 was pretty successful, minus the kids

slashing all our tires and breaking the van window, guys trying to pick up Chris, our merch guy, us all attempting to kick a certain member out in the middle of Washington State, having the van company charge us for chipping the windshield, and getting my nose broken and busted wide open by a flying beer bottle…It was great. George Tabb told me that Tim Yohannon, founder of this zine, once said (referring to punk rock), "No good deed goes unpunished." But…I won't bore you with some band's details; we're in the zine business here. Zines are the antithesis of the band world. I could probably go on about other things going through my head this month, such as the difference between a sub-genre that is outright bad, like screamo, and one that is just downright wrong, like harmonica punk. I could also go on about zines that have too much common knowledge material compared to zines that mistake common knowledge for common sense, such as something some horrid competitor's "punk" zine called "DIY Sex." Since I haven't spent my life pretending I live in the world of Barbarella, I'm just gonna guess that some super ugly chick wrote that one in hopes of getting some from some insipid unwashed losers.

No! I'm gonna talk about schoolteachers. Over the years, I've had to deal with a lot of different people of various cultural and economic backgrounds. I mean, a lot of people have prejudices, but I tend to think that my prejudices are pretty well informed. I've become an expert on handling Italian, Jew, Middle Eastern, African American, Very Wealthy, Suburban, NYC Mook, Guido, Mentally Challenged, Menstrually Challenged, Homeless, and heavily medicated in all ways. I haven't figured out Indian women yet; I think it's hopeless. All this just from editing people's wedding videos and hanging out at a record store. Schoolteachers are in a class by themselves.

I'm not trying to make some point about the education system in America; my guess is that schoolteachers are this way worldwide. I was hit with a perfect example of this the other day. About a month ago, I edited a wedding video for this couple. Their names ended in an –azia and a –entito. You know, run of the mill suburban Italians. Their grandparents probably sat with their street carts selling tomatoes and olive oil next to my grandparents. (Yeah I know, importing tomatoes and olive oil is the standard lie Italians give for the "business" they do, but my great-grandpa actually did that, and my mom assures me he was the sweetest man, not some mobster.) My other, German great-grandpa delivered Pepsi. Anyhow, back to the story—this couple's folks probably moved out to some brand new suburb 30 years ago to escape the rush of tan and dark people moving into the old neighborhood. I've edited plenty of weddings for nice dull folks like Mr. n Mrs. ******atzia before. They don't demand the high production values that the Jews want, (it's OK if the ceremony sound is echoey, hey it's hard to ever understand anyone clearly in a Catholic Church, acoustically or any other way—they think its groundbreaking to do away with Latin, for chrissakes), but they sometimes complain about weird relatives who get drunk. The bride looks a little too chunky when my boss is shooting her in her underwear, putting her dress on. It's usually not a big deal, and people like this are usually very cool about me fixing it all up and sending them on their merry road to ultimate divorce. Anyhow, right off the bat these folks were dead serious. They made multiple neurotic phone calls to my boss, and I stopped in for a few minutes the day after they started complaining and they showed up unannounced at 4 PM and I was unlucky enough to meet them. I tried my best to reassure them that I would stand on my head to make sure they were happy with their video, and that they would getting the level of service that they paid for, but that this is the way I go about it. A couple of weeks later, they were back on the phone complaining to my boss, not only about the video, but about my attitude as well.

I ask Jean, my employer, "OK, why are they acting this way? They aren't first-generation Europeans, they're not Jewish, they're not super rich. What excuse do they have to be such anal-retentive assholes?" "Hmmm, well, they're both schoolteachers."

Bingo! Schoolteachers. I suddenly got some flashbacks to when I worked at BOCES Technical Facility. It was a job where I fixed computers and other equipment for public school systems. Every week, we'd have 50-year-old 16 mm projectors and record players come back because, "It hums." Or, "There is a rubber foot missing." We'd go on service calls to pull bubblegum out of floppy disk drives, and we'd get complaint cards that read, "The computers were dusty." I'm sure if you ask anyone who works in or around a school, the most despised group is not the students, or the administration—it's the teachers.

So, I have to ask myself why schoolteachers are such a pain in the ass bunch of whiners. Well, I had a little consultation with two of my friends who are schoolteachers and actually aren't like this. My best friend Mike is a special ed teacher in a high school. He has emotionally and mentally challenged and disturbed, whatever you want to call them, bad kids. So, he doesn't have anything like a normal classroom or lessons; he's trying to pull these kids back into civilization somehow. He tells me about how much of a drag his fellow teachers are. They constantly whine about things going on at work, and when they go home the whining doesn't end. "This teacher I work with is on maternity leave, so she's home and bored, and I made the mistake of answering the phone one day and she went on for an hour about how she's abnormally lactating!" J.K. is a second grade teacher—she told me that grade school teachers aren't like this, because smaller kids still have some hope and you can actually get through a day or a school year without feeling a sense of hopelessness that many high school teachers experience.

My sister is a teacher, and as far as I see it, she was too much of a wuss to take on real life, and she really just doesn't wanna leave school, ever. I just see her as someone who never really let herself mature—of course, this probably makes her a great teacher because she eats, dresses, and watches the same TV shows and movies as her students. But on the other hand, most of her non-teacher friends have faded away over the past five years, probably because she's such a miserable whiner. Everything is some sort of struggle to her, and her only friends are other teachers who love to share their complaints with her. It's just a vicious circle of whining about how the system is against them, about how their lives are so hard and how damn important they are.

Well, I see a similar pattern among many punk rock type people. There's a whole hell of a lot of complaining to do, but if you think of punk as politics, obviously no one is listening. And if you apply it to music, obviously everyone is tone deaf. A lot of punk rock people tend to go into teaching, probably because they can pretend they are making a difference in the world without having to actually do a great job. I mean, teaching summer camp did show me that teaching is a damn hard thing to do, I mean showing them how to do and understand things is fun, but gaining their attention when you have to wake up at 6 AM is a horrible situation, no matter how many days off they throw at you.

The one good thing about teachers when I was growing up was this: of all the teachers I can think of from my past, I felt they all set a very good example for me. I would look at the guy teaching me world history, or earth science (actually I didn't take that, only remedial kids did because you were supposed to have that in 8th grade) and think, why the fuck would I ever want to stand up there, sip coffee, and teach jerks like me.

THE SHEMPS – *Spazz Out* CD should be out on Reservation Records around the time you read this. www.rezrecs.com. Oh yeah, FUCK BAD WIZARD, rock star

dickbags. Thank you. bill@candids.com

"Frank N Furter, it's all over, your mission is a failure, your lifestyle too extreme," I sang as I stood in front of the packed movie theater in Tallahassee, Florida, in a borrowed gold lamé outfit. With a blonde wig and banana on my head, a metal detector turned ray-gun in my hands, and *The Rocky Horror Picture Show* screening behind me.

"I'm your new commander, you know I'm a prisoner," I continued, while looking at Tammy, who was wearing a French maid's outfit, and looking at an audience full of jocks, rednecks, drama students, and my dad, "we return to Transylvania, prepare the transit beam."

"Wait," shouted Courtney, the hottest girl I knew, even though she liked to dress as a man, "I can explain!"

I stood there, gawking at her, in her black wig, black lipstick, black eye-liner, black sequined pumps, black fishnets, black corset, black cape, and black underwear with a bulge in it, and at that second, I knew I was in love.

"On the day, I went away," she started, and my mind and body drifted toward the back of the theater. It was late August, and we were celebrating the one year anniversary of *Rocky Horror* in Tallahassee, and the end of a wildly fun summer. As I walked past my dad, he stared at me in my girlish outfit, and snarled. If I'd only have known then what I know now. But that's another story.

*

It was the summer between my junior and senior year of high school. In Florida. So, really, that's like between sixth and seventh grade in New York terms. I had taken a full time job at the local supermarket called Publix, where I was gainfully employed as a bag boy with my pal Louis. Louis had just graduated from his senior year, and was working his way through the summer before starting college in the fall. We decided to become bag boys because we had heard that cashiers put out.

"No George," explained Henry, the floor manager, "how many times do I have to tell you, it's cans first, then the bread."

I looked at Henry and just shrugged my shoulders. I knew that cans went first, followed by other heavy stuff, then the lighter stuff, but I liked to fuck up people's food. It was one of the small pleasures I could get living in Florida. Besides, the lady I was bagging for never, ever tipped me, and made me load up her bags into the back of her pick-up, which had that nasty dog that always tried to bite me.

"Ya got it, George?" asked Henry, with his usual slur.

I told him I did. I kind of felt sorry for Henry. He was at least fifty years old, and his big job in life was watching a bunch of us little fucks bag groceries for the trash that lived in the South. Actually, Henry used to have another job, but he lost it. Due to an accident. He used to work with vets. But now he had a horse-shoe shaped dent in his forehead. And was missing part of his brain. Tommy Rice, a co-worker, told me that Henry was trying to take the temperature of a horse, but was standing in the wrong place. Oh well. Florida.

"Now get back to work there, young man, and you may make stock boy one day if ya keep at it," said Henry, then patted me on the shoulder and walked away.

"Stock boy is where the bucks are," said Tommy Rice, bagging food to my left, behind this cashier, Donna, who had a great behind, "and chicks go for the bucks."

I listened to Tommy, and knew that he knew. See, Tommy Rice was "God's Gift To Women." At least that is what he called himself, or "GGTW" for short. Tommy had been in the Navy for about two years before they discharged him. He says it was because his IQ was too high. I think it was 'cause he looked like Jerry Lewis and smelled like a gorilla.

"When ya got bucks, the chicks dig ya," said Tommy, with his goofy black-framed glasses, messed-up hair, and teeth that went in all directions.

"Yeah Tabb," said Louis, who was bagging on my right side, "The chicks want bucks and good looks. And you have neither."

Then Tommy and Louis both laughed. I would have too, but I was in love with my cashier, Patty, whose brother, David, I had gone to school with, but who was now in jail for grand-theft and drug dealing.

"Ignore them, George," said Patty, as she counted out ones and quarters for the redneck woman I was bagging for, "I think you are cute, and any girl would consider you a catch."

I blushed as I pushed the current load of groceries into the hot Tallahassee parking lot, where the dog in the pick-up did actually bite off part of my shirt.

Later that night, after we were done mopping the floors and scraping up dried gum, we stole a six-pack of Grolsh, and sat in the empty parking lot, drinking it. It was only about 93 degrees out, a cool evening.

"Ya gotta learn what chicks like," explained Tommy to Louis and me, as we sat on the hood of my orange Datsun 510 Station Wagon with the blue Batman bat painted on it.

"I know that they like," I said to Tommy, as I popped the rubber top off another Grolsh, "they like guys who are nice and who are sensitive."

"Tabb, my man," explained Tommy, God's Gift To Women, "Ya got it all wrong."

"Yeah Tabb," added Louis, "Tommy's right, you don't know shit."

"Oh, like you do," I said to Louis, "like you've been with a girl."

Louis suddenly shut up. But Tommy didn't.

"I have," explained Tommy, "I've actually gone all the way. I've done it. Like I keep telling you guys, I'm God's Gift To Women."

Louis and I just stared at Tommy, not really knowing whether to believe him. But we kind of had to because he was at least four years older than us. At least. It was probably more like ten.

"What's the inside of a woman feel like?" I asked Tommy.

Tommy just looked at Louis and me shaking his head.

"You guys really wanna know what the inside of a pussy feels like?" he asked.

We both nodded our heads like dummies. The truth was neither of us had even been near a vagina since we were born.

"Well," explained Tommy, as sweat dripped down his face and onto his bottle of Grolsh, "I'll tell ya what, I'm gonna tell ya. Take your fingers and put them inside your mouths."

We did as we were told.

"Now rub your fingers along the inside of your cheeks," explained Tommy.

We did. I could taste the dried dirt, sweat, and mopping fluid along with the beer.

"Now that," explained Tommy, God's Gift To Women, "is what a pussy feels like."

Later that night, I remember going home, opening a *Penthouse* magazine to a pictorial with a blonde girl on a leopard skin rug, and masturbating with my right hand. I put my entire left hand in my mouth the whole time, and made believe it was a vagina.

Unfortunately, my jaw locked open, like it sometimes does, and I walked around my house for hours saying "I can't cwose my moufe."

*

Every day that summer was the same. Work. And the nights were spent drunk, or thinking of getting drunk. And of course, thinking of getting laid. And the closest I'd come to that was every Friday and Saturday night. Starting at midnight. Because that's when *The Rocky Horror Picture Show* would start rolling at the movie theater on Monroe Street. And I'd be there. At every show.

I first saw *Rocky Horror* at The Waverly

Theater, here in New York. I was around 16 at the time, and my mom and Nick had taken me to see it. They told me it was a great and funny film, and that I would enjoy it as much as any Mel Brooks or Woody Allen flick.

When I got to the theater, there were all these freaky people in fucked up make-up all over the place. Then there was me. And my mom and Nick.

When the movie started, people started screaming at the screen, and throwing stuff like rice, toilet paper, and confetti. It was kind of neat. Then on the screen I saw a guy in women's underwear sing, "I'm just a sweet transvestite, from Transsexual, Transylvania," and I kind of lost it. I looked at my mom and Nick, and wondered why the hell they had taken me to a movie where men dressed as women, and then had sex. I began to believe what my stepmom and dad had been saying about my mom and Nick all along. That they did worship Satan, and were willing to sell me into a child-slave ring.

As the movie continued, I really began to get into the music. But I didn't let on. I also really began to get into all the people getting naked in the rows in front of me. It was amazing. They were changing their shirts and pants like they were in a locker room or something. I saw lots of breasts, and even some pubic hair. It totally ruled. Of course I thought my mom and Nick were complete pervs for taking me to this, but at the time, that wasn't important. The naked people were. And also, the message of the film, "Don't Dream It, Be It," as sung by Tim Curry, in the pool scene.

I saw *Rocky Horror* many more times in New York before moving to Florida. I burned through two copies of the record, and was on my third when I actually got to Florida. I also understood why my mom and Nick liked the movie so much. It was about freedom. Liberation. Alienation. Hell, it was about me.

So every Friday and Saturday at midnight, I'd be over at the theater with my other *Rocky Horror* friends, Louis, Sally, who liked to dress as Columbia, Tammy, who did Magenta, Bill, who did Brad, Marlene, who dressed as Janet, Ginny, who did Dr. Scott, and Courtney. Courtney. Courtney who did the best Frank N Furter south of New York and was right up there with New York's Dori Hartley. And me? Well, I did Riff-Raff every once in a while, and other characters too. But mostly I was like the Sal Piro of Tallahassee. Sal ran the *Rocky Horror* fan club in New York, doing all the shows at The Waverly, then the Eighth Street Playhouse, and was my idol. I even talked to him once. So I kinda ran *Rocky Horror* in Tallahassee. In fact, I was the one who talked the theater owners into getting it played every weekend. I promised them a big following, and lots of money. The same thing I do with my band now.

Every Friday and Saturday, as the lights would dim at midnight, and the giant lips would fill up the entire screen, we'd be sitting in the back row waiting to throw stuff, talk back to the characters, and even run up to the front of the theater and act out our scenes.

At first I liked Sally the best. Columbia. I had met her at the third or fourth screening of the movie, and she looked awesome in her sequined skirts and blazer. She wore bright colored make-up and had really red hair. She'd always smile at me, and I'd smile back at her. One night I got up the courage to talk to her, and found out she was attending Florida State University, and was at least three or four years older than me. She introduced me to Bill, Marlene, Ginny, Tammy, and all the others. They too were all in college, and at least a few years older. At first I lied and said I was in college, and they believed me. But fat mouth Louis told them otherwise, and that's why I think I never scored with Sally. Though I did make out with her in her driveway one morning after seeing *Rocky Horror,* then spending the night at Denny's, then drinking.

I remember feeling her tongue dance around my mouth, and I could taste the cigarette smoke. It was a wonderful feeling, and was only the second time in my life I had ever kissed a girl. As we kissed, listening to The Roxy Version of The Rocky Horror Show, I felt my heart race, and my pants start to tighten.

"So, you are in high school, huh?" said Sally, as we sat in her car on Nez Perce Drive.

"Yeah," I answered, "but I'm more mature than that."

"Have you ever taken a lover?" she asked.

I told her that I had taken many lovers, and was a pro. She laughed, and kissed me some more. She knew.

As the weekends passed, I fell more and more in love with Sally. Even though we never made out after that morning, I felt I had a chance with her. She treated me different than all the other guys. She actually listened to what I had to say, and was real impressed that I was from New York. I was impressed with her, her kissing skills, and her female body.

Eventually, the Sally thing ended. She started seeing this guy Don, from a local metal cover band, and lost all interest in me. Well, except for being friends. Arrgh.

But I didn't lose interest in her that fast. In fact, one night, she invited Louis and me to a post-*Rocky Horror* party at Ginny's house, and we went.

Before we got there, Louis and I finished off an entire bottle of Banker's Reserve Rum. The worst and cheapest brand of booze we could find at the ABC Liquor Lounge. We mixed it with Coke in Burger King cups, and the wax actually melted off the sides of the cup.

As we finished off the bottle in the Publix parking lot, listening to The Dead Boys on my Archer car stereo, my cup collapsed from the rum and spilled all over me. But I didn't care. I was so wasted I could hardly see. That is when I knew it was time to drive over to the party.

I somehow navigated the car down Tennessee Street, trying to stay between the flashing white lines. I thought I was doing well until a cop pulled us over.

"Driver's license and registration," said the cop as I rolled down my window to talk to him.

"My what?" I yelled over The Dead Boys' "Down In Flames."

"Sir, turn down the stereo and give me your driver's license and registration."

I gave the cop the stuff, turned down the stereo, and looked at Louis.

"I told you I should have been driving," said Louis.

"Fuck you," I said, "You are drunker than me, and I'm not letting you near the steering wheel of my car."

"Tabb, you're a pussy," was Louis's response.

So we sat there, in my Datsun 510 Station Wagon with the blue Batman bat on the hood, parked on the side of Tennessee Street, with a cop car behind us with its flashing blue and red lights. The colors began to make me nauseous, and I thought I was gonna puke.

Finally the cop walked back to my car. I was convinced he was gonna pull me out, give me an intoxication test, then take me to a Florida jail, where'd I'd be raped by guys who looked like they were in *Deliverance* and would say, "Hey Jew Boy, squeal like a pig."

"Sir," said the cop, "are you aware you have a right tail light out?"
I didn't say anything. I was in shock.

"I am issuing you a ticket. If you have it fixed within a week, you don't have to pay the fine."
And then he gave me the ticket and walked away. That was it. All over.

I just looked at Louis, and he looked at me. Then we started to laugh like crazy. I cranked up the Dead Boys, and started the car. But the cop didn't move.

So I slowly pulled into traffic, and tried like hell to drive like I was sober. Looking back on the whole thing, it would have served me right to have gone to jail. Drunk driving is a bad thing. You could run over people. And kill them. And although their lives don't count for much in Florida, I still feel guilty about it.

I drove real slow to the party, and thank God the cop didn't follow me. I went up three one-way streets the wrong way, and wound up on someone's lawn before we made it to the party.

As we pulled into Ginny's driveway, I

remember "bumping" into Sally's rear fender on her Honda Civic. I figured she wouldn't notice the dent on it. Until she picked it up off the ground.

Inside the house Louis and I found heaven. Four college girls and a bathtub filled with grain alcohol and Hawaiian Punch.

"Listen George," said Sally, in a sort of firm voice, "grain alcohol is very strong stuff—it can make you extremely drunk."

I told Sally that I drank it all the time and that I was a pro. She gave me that look that said "she knew" again.

Four or five huge plastic cups of grain and punch later, I found myself making out with Sally on Ginny's couch. The Ramones' *Road To Ruin* was playing, and every few minutes I'd stop kissing her, stand up, and sing along with words like "Twenty-twenty-twenty four hours to go, I wanna be sedated!"

Sally and I continued to make out like crazy, and somehow I had managed to get her shirt up around her neck. I was kissing her nipples, and really getting into it, when I turned and saw Louis looking at us.

"What are you looking at, wus?" I yelled at Louis.

He said nothing and just smiled as he drank another cup of grain and punch.

I then looked over to the other side of the room and saw Marlene, Tammy, and Sally watching us go at it. "Cool," I thought.

I went back to kissing Sally's nipples. They were big and round. But somehow I had always imagined them being smaller. As I touched her breasts, I imagined them as always being smaller too. No matter.

I continued to kiss and make out with Sally, and actually took my shirt off. I was getting all hot and sweaty, and was wondering when Sally would invite me into a private room to "do it."

"I used to have a name, bad bad brain," I sang along to the Ramones album as I stood up for the umpteenth time. Then, as I fell back on the couch with Sally, I looked over at everyone watching us again. Louis was still smiling, as were Marlene, Sally, and Tammy.

I started kissing again, then it hit me. Sally was watching me.

How could she be watching me, and making out with me?

My heart started to beat real fast and I quickly came to the conclusion that I was dead, and that this all was some sort of vision right before Satan would come up from Hades, grasp my soul, and take me to a place that was hot and mean. Like Florida. Only worse.

I looked down at Sally again, and this time, really tried to focus my eyes. She looked all fuzzy, and topless. I looked again, and again, and finally saw that I was making out with Ginny. Dr. Scott. I was fucking making out with Dr. Scott! Bleech.

I jumped off the couch, yelled something about not liking old German men, heard everyone laugh at me, and that was the last thing I remembered.

Until I woke up the next morning on the floor next to Louis. He told me I had passed out after almost "doing" Ginny, and that he wasn't feeling too well. I started to tell him I felt the same way, and threw up all over myself.

Somehow we made it out to my car, and I started to drive us both home. As I drove, I imagined I was flying an airplane, and Louis was my co-pilot.

"Tallahassee," I'd say into my CB radio, "This is Anarchy Air number six-six-sixer, are we cleared for take off?"

Louis laughed and told me he should drive. As I yelled at him to shut-up, I vomited some more all over myself.

Eventually we both made it to my house with Louis driving. I started to drive on lawns and sidewalks. I couldn't see. Everything was gray, and I really felt as though I was in the clouds.

Louis and I staggered into my dad's house at like eight in the morning, and my dad was sitting in the kitchen eating breakfast.

"Hiya pop," I said to my dad, in my leather jacket, jeans, and covered in puke.

"Um, hello Mr. Tabb," was Louis's response.

"How did you get home?" yelled my dad at both of us.

"Louis flew the plane, dad, I went in the back with the stewardesses."

I saw Louis fight to hold back a smile.

"George, go to your fucking room," yelled my dad, "and I'll call Louis's parents. You are grounded. Forever."

"How long is that?" I asked.

It was then my dad grabbed me by the back of my jacket and dragged me to my room.

"I don't feel so good, dad" I said, as he growled and swore at me under his breath.

"You fucking little punk. I'd kick your ass, but you wouldn't feel it because you are too drunk."

"Ha," was my response.

My dad got me to my room, and I noticed Louis had followed us.

"I think I'm gonna be sick," I said to my dad, then threw up on his slippers, with his feet still in them.

Louis laughed.

"You think that's funny, Louis?" asked my Dad.

Louis looked at the ground.

"What will be funny is when your dad comes here and kicks your lousy ass. If you were my son, I'd beat you to an inch of your life."

"But he's not your son, dad," I said, and then added "ha."

"Fuck you, George," yelled my dad.

As he went to leave my room, I threw up on him again. Then I threw up some more and some more. And some more. Eventually I was vomiting blood, and swearing I'd never drink again. And I kept that promise. Until the next weekend.

*

One night about halfway through the summer, Bill, who liked being Brad, and I were hanging out in my car in the movie theater parking lot, drinking.

"George," he said to me, "you look really cool in your leather jacket, even though it's a million degrees out."

I looked at Bill. "Um," I stammered, "you look really good in your corset, fishnets, pumps, and girlie underwear," I said back.

"You really think so?" he asked.

"Yeah," I lied. Actually, he looked like a wuss, but that was to be expected from a college drama student. And besides, he was a really nice guy.

"Do you like me George?" asked Bill.

I told him that I did, and that he was very nice and all.

"I mean, do you like me?" he said.

Again I told him I thought that he was a very pleasant fellow, and fun to be around, even though he drank way too much Wild Turkey.

"I mean," said Bill, "do you think I'm cute?"

"Um, sure," I said, not making much of what he was saying, or the whole conversation.

"Have you ever had a man?" he asked.

I looked at him, and finally understood where the conversation was going.

"Um, no," I said, "but I haven't had a woman, either," I added, trying to make him feel better.

"Well, George," he said as he looked me in the eyes from behind his black-framed Brad Majors' glasses, "I think you and I should make love."

I didn't say anything. I didn't know what to say. He was my friend and all, and I didn't want to hurt his feelings, and he did have nice legs.

"Wouldn't it be nice?" he then said, in a Frank N Furter voice.

I thought about it for a few more seconds, and suddenly Bill was right in my face, with his tongue in my mouth.

"Bill," I said to him as I gently pushed him away, "I don't think I'm ready for this."

"You don't like me? You don't like the way I dress?" he said, hurt.

I looked at his fishnets and girlie underwear, and had to admit to myself that it did give me a boner, but, alas, Bill just didn't turn me on.

"You look beautiful Bill, just like Brad," I explained, "but I'm not ready for that yet. Maybe some other time."

"Fuck you, George," he yelled.

Then Bill opened the car door, and stormed out in his fishnets and black

pumps.

"I'm sorry," I yelled to him as he stomped across the parking lot. He just flipped me off.

As I watched him walk away I did have to admit to myself that he had a nice ass.

*

Two weekends and many drinks later, I found myself in my car with Courtney before the movie. In the same parking spot.

"You make a great Frank N Furter," I said to her as she sat there, in her black cape, black lipstick, black make-up, black fishnets, black wig, and everything.

"You're too kind," was her reply, in a voice as low as Tim Curry's.

We sat in my car listening to the London version of Rocky Horror, hearing the differences in Tim's voice.

"He's so sexy," Courtney said as she closed her eyes and sang along.

"So are you," I said back to her.

She opened her eyes, and I saw these beautiful blue orbs looking me right back in my eyes.

"You think I'm pretty?" she asked, forgetting her character for a few seconds.

I told her I thought she was great. Without her wardrobe she had beautiful blondish-red hair, a great body, and a wonderful smile. With her wardrobe, she was the hottest she-he I'd ever seen.

"Thank you George," she said, and leaned over and kissed me. Tongue and all.

The next thing I know I'm sitting in my car making out with Dr. Frank N. Furter. We are kissing and touching and I really, really got excited. In between kisses, she'd fall in and out of character, saying things like "Isn't this nice," and "In just seven days, I can make you a man."

Finally I got enough courage up and put my hands on her breasts. But I couldn't feel them.

"Um," I stammered.

"They're taped down, I have to be the best Frank, you know," whispered Courtney in my ear.

So I felt up her taped-down breasts and it was nice.

We kept kissing and I felt Courtney's gloved hand slide under my leather jacket and up my shirt, and it felt nice. That is when I went for it. I dropped my hand to her crotch.

I started to feel around her leather underwear, on the outside, and then felt a huge bulge.

I stopped.

"What's wrong?" whispered Dr. Frank N Furter in my ear, "don't you like it?"

I didn't know what to say.

"You mean to tell me you don't like being with a man?" she said into my ear, and then slid her hand to my crotch and squeezed.

I let out a small yelp, and then kissed her some more as I thought about my situation. I wouldn't make out with Bill, who was a man dressed as a man dressed as a woman. But I would make out with a woman dressed as a man dressed as a woman. It all kinda made me dizzy.

"I, um," I stammered, "I've never been with a man."

Suddenly Courtney stopped kissing me, and let go of my crotch.

"How could you say that?" she yelled at me.

"What?" I said, really confused.

"Fuck you, George," she said, then opened my car door, and stomped out in her fish-nets and black pumps.

"I'm sorry for whatever," I yelled to her.

"What? You don't consider me a man? So what if it's a dildo. I'm more of a man then you'll ever be," yelled Courtney.

Then she spit on my car, flung her cape, and stomped away.

I looked around the parking lot and saw lots of guys in pick-up trucks, who were waiting for the midnight showing of the newest Chuck Norris movie, laughing.

As Courtney walked away, I did have to admit to myself that she had a nice ass.

*

The following weeks of the summer flew by as Louis and I continued to bag groceries, and listen to the wisdom of Tommy Rice. When I told Tommy that I had actually touched breasts, he stole me a whole case of Grolsh after closing, which we drank while pissing in the coleslaw in the deli department.

"Tabb," he said, as he whizzed into the metallic bin, "touching titty is great. Soon you be eating pussy with a spoon."

I tried to figure out if that meant anything, because, with Tommy, God's Gift To Women, ya never knew.

"But Tabb touched the wrong titty," said Louis. So I punched him.

A few days later, while bagging, Patty, my favorite cashier asked me to come to the back to help her count her register. I said I would.

When we got into the back, Patty grabbed me by my clip-on tie and pushed her tongue down my throat.

"What was that for?" I asked her when she was finished.

"For you," was her reply, and then she went back up front.

When I returned to bag some more, Louis and Tommy kept staring at me.

"George," I heard Henry slur behind me, "can I have a word with you?"

I told him sure, and he walked me off to the side of the floor.

"You have lipstick all over your face," is what he told me, and then gave me a handkerchief to wipe it off.

I thanked him, wiped my face, and started to return to work.

"She likes you," Henry said, "they all like you. Don't listen to a world of that horseshit Tommy and Louis tell you, keep up the good work, and by this time next year, you'll have girls all over you like flies on shit, and you may even make stock boy."

I smiled as I resumed my post, putting cans on the bottom, followed by glass, then soft foods.

*

The final weekend of the summer came, and it was time for the one year anniversary of *The Rocky Horror Picture Show* in Tallahassee, Florida. And I was in charge of the whole thing. Floor show and all.

The night of the show we all went to Marlene's house and got in our costumes. Bill lent me his gold lamee outfit, and Sally lent me a blond wig. I tied the hair around a banana, and looked just like Riff-Raff at the end of the movie. Sally wore her sequined outfit, and Tammy, the French maid costume. Bill looked great in his new fish-nets and pumps, and Courtney was absolutely stunning. Tommy Rice and Louis helped us dress, and then we were ready to take on the world.

At exactly midnight, the theater dimmed, and the lips came up on the screen. We all shouted with delight, and sang along to every word. Then, when the action started on screen, we went up front and did our floor-show.

As the night continued, I felt a real sense of belonging to this strange group of people. Bill, a guy who wanted to be a girl, and Courtney, a girl who wanted to be a guy. Tammy and Sally, both great friends who I knew I'd never forget, and Marlene and Ginny, one of whom gave me my first experience with boobs.

After "Rose Tint My World," it was my big part in the floor show, and I came out singing with Louis and Tommy holding flashlights on me and Tammy. I sang the words out loud, as Richard O'Brian did the same on the screen. I sang with pride and true emotion for my friends, and myself. I knew my dad was somewhere in the audience, and although I knew he hated all my friends and called them "fags," he must of been proud of me somewhere in his heart. He was there. It must have been for some reason.

I finished my part, and then watched Courtney sing an emotionally drenched "I'm Going Home," and actually wept. In a way, we were all going home. The summer was ending, and we'd all be going back to our lives very soon. This was it.

"Good-bye, was all I had to say," sang Courtney, as tears rolled off her face, "now I, I, I want to come again, and stay, cause I've seen, blue skies, through the tears, and I realize, I'm going home."

I looked over at Sally and Tammy as Courtney finished the song, and they too were crying. As was Bill, Marlene, and even Tommy Rice. We all knew we'd miss

each other, and somewhere inside of us, we all knew we'd all grow some, each in his or her own way, and become different. Things would never be the same. We'd all go home. To different places.

*

And we did. Louis went off to college, and Sally and Tammy returned to FSU. Tommy made stock-boy and eventually became a floor manager. I saw Marlene and Ginny in New York some years later at a party. And Courtney, I never heard from or saw again, although I do think about her often.

And as for my love of *Rocky Horror*, I just got the film on DVD (my VHS tape broke) after seeing it in the theater over a hundred and sixty seven times. I've yet to watch it on disc, and don't know if I can. When I even think of putting it in my Xbox, I feel a lump well-up in the back of my throat.

Oh, and that other story about my dad? Well, it turns out after he passed away I found out he was a closet transvestite. He especially liked to wear women's underwear and fish-nets. If he were alive today, I'd tell him I understood. It was one of the few things about him I could.

Take My Life, Please

Endnotes:

1. www.georgetabb.com is my website address. Please visit!
2. My book "Playing Right Field, A Jew Grows in Greenwich" will be out any week now, if it's not out already! Please buy it as it's my first book, it's funny, and for everyone who has ever felt like they've been fucked with or fucked over. Check out the pubisher as well, Soft Skull, at www.softskull.com.
3. More about my book - you can always ask your local bookstore to get it or order it on Amazon. I've made it Really Cheap on purpose, so everyone can afford it. Why? Because that's PUNK ROCK!

George Tabb

http:/'/www.georgetabb.com

Step Aside

Ethan and Reality Clash Records have a brutal skinhead record for you this month. COUNTERATTACK, from Washington DC, is hardnosed skinhead music for the stoutest of humans! The singing is deep and dripping with anger. COUNTERATTACK pulverizes you with stinging guitar and pounding drums. These skins power through "Most Hated"; "Brick and Stone"; "Step Aside"; and "Cracks in the Armor"; and arrive at "Opaque Movements". This song has deep lyrics and well-thought-out concepts. "Everything that's heard is set in stone / The truth is not what you care to know / Preying on the weak is a coward's guise / So a spineless life is what you devise / You judge your might by bruises made / But like your reasoning bruises fade / Mouth and fists move while mind is still / The shadow you cast is too big to fill / Your self-appointed job is to clean the streets / Patrolling the night with your fascist police / We're a threat because our wits are strong / Opaque movements never last long / The flood began with another fool / Whose plans have grown beyond control / Explosives packed tight with a short fuse / Will one day kill their maker too / Time weakens all the hardest frames / The greater strength is what remains / By flexing what these killers can't touch / I'll survive the pain of their measured thrusts."

Yes! COUNTERATTACK can really turn a phrase. The men hammer through "Home is Where the Floor Is"; "Good for Nothing"; "Coast to Coast"; "If I Do" and "Let's Roll". This is good skinhead music! Write for your Step Aside CD to: Reality Clash Records, PO Box 491, Dana Point, CA 92629; *www.realityclash.com.*

Armen and his esteemed Headache Records from Midland Park, New Jersey presents LOUSY BREAK, from that famous New Jersey beach town Manasquan. This is good punk rock played with enthusiasm! LOUSY BREAK plows through three fast punk burners: "Devil on Both Shoulders", "Bullet in a Head", and "KK Snare" before they arrive at "Dubious Equity". Read the words to this one: "Look at all the pissed off faces / Stagger around to find a reason / Wondering when the next shoe's gonna fall / Armageddon on the horizon / More and more becoming fans of war / Running short on decisive solutions / Learn from the past to make sure there's a future / A good soldier marches to heaven / 45 minutes from start to finish / And 2 months to put out the fires / Clean up the shit before someone slips up / Then starts pointing the finger of feeble blame / More and more it's time to shut the door / Aware for only our protection / Just throwing words won't stop all the madness". Headache Records has another winner in its stable with LOUSY BREAK! This punk rock will grab you by the short hairs! The men of LOUSY BREAK ream your skull with "Before the World Goes Off"; "Not Good Enough"; "Up Your Ass"; the excellent tune "Goddamn Memories"; "Human Waste"; "Muddafuggin' Money"; "Beat Up"; "Zero Chance" and more! This is old school punk rock with good harmonies, lots of guitars, breakneck speed, and furious drumming! Get LOUSY BREAK today! Headache Records, PO Box 204, Midland Park, New Jersey 07432.

2003's "Champions of Canadian Punk, FUCKED UP have another blistering slab of crazy good guitar punk for you little fuckers! The new 45 is called *Dance of Death* and this Deranged Records attack continues where *The Police* left off. You get more shouted punk with blistering guitar/bass/drum assault. Side two is represented by "Zezezozose" and again, the singer of FUCKED UP carves out his unique territory in your brain. Fucking awesome! Write to Deranged Records for your new fix of FUCKED UP: PO Box 543, Station P, Toronto, ON M5S 2T1, Canada.

Mike Josephson and his Longshot Records have a really good CD for you this month! THE LANCASTERS debut CD is called *Alexander & Gore* and this is high quality street music for skins and punks! THE LANCASTERS features the excellent lead singer Greg, (ex-SUBWAY THUGS). The tunes on Alexander & Gore are catchy Oi! with Greg's gruff vocals and that excellent "all screwed up" guitar sound that the TEMPLARS employ. Orv on drums and All on bass provide a really solid foundation for Greg's guitar to work off of. THE LANCASTERS churn right through "Burn the Bastards"; "Asphyxiation"; "I Don't Wanna Be"; "Why Don't You" and then THE LANCASTERS come to "Mental Breakdown". This one is quite good! Read the lyrics to "Mental Breakdown": "I'm alive and I'm free – 'Cause I do what I want / It's you, not me – fuck you / Mental Breakdown / I don't see what's going on / Everything is in black and white / I feel the tension grown / My mind's about to blow / Everything is not the same / Can't seem to runaway / Always left in the dark / This seems to ignite the spark". THE LANCASTERS continue through "Take a Look", "The Future", "Stiff", "Control", and then you are treated to "Wasted Life". Check this song out: "I don't want to see another wasted life / I don't want to hear about a tortured soul / I don't wanna see another victim tonight / Soldiers in the streets / Soldiers everywhere / This one goes out to your lost ones / Anguish in their eyes / Sorrow in their hearts / What the hell is wrong with everyone".

Two more good songs remain: "Marching Through the Streets" and "Lights Out". This is a very good CD – you get lots of melodies, lots of hooks, and all around consistently good musicianship! Get *Alexander & Gore* by THE LANCASTERS from Longshot Records: PMB #72, 302 Bedford Ave., Brooklyn, NY 11211, USA; *www.longshotmusic.com.*

Blind Beggar Records from Eppenbrunn, Germany presents BANNER OF THUGS with their new LP *First Feat of Arms*. These skins and punks from the Netherlands play a rough and tumble type of Oi! with a full complement of sharpened teeth. This band is fronted by two excellent

singers with pounding drums, guitar, and bass. The sound of BANNER OF THUGS is not unlike DISCIPLINE, and the tunes are both threatening and memorable. The lyrics show that the men of BANNER OF THUGS think about more than just beer – read the words to "Empty Promises": "Why should I care about politics / It's all a bunch of shit / All the promises they make / I couldn't care a bit / Left wing, right wing / Do I care, it's all Chinese to me / So I give you assholes one advice / Fuck off and let me be / Politicians, I wish they'd fucking die / Politics, nothing but filthy lies / They promise gold, they promise wealth / But they just want it for themselves / With your support they're gonna get it / I hope they'll burn in hell / They stab your back when you don't look / And say it was the other / So I say goodbye to all you jerks / And won't again be bothered". Good shit!

Now read the wry commentary that BANNER OF THUGS calls "Pulp": "What is today? The music business sucks / Invented girl-bands / Sell CDs to frustrated fucks / They music has no passion / They're in it for the cash / Fuckin' weird noises, just computer trash / Oh, it's worse than it's ever been / Can you tell me what went wrong / With today's teens / Steroid muscles and big plastic tits / All this to impress the ignorant trendy kids / Tell me what you hear / When you turn the radio on / Horny shits and macho-punks / Singin' passionless songs". Very good! These guys have got the violent sound of the BRUISERS down cold!

Keep your eye peeled for more from BANNER OF THUGS! For the *First Feat of Arms* LP write to Blind Beggar Records, Bogenstr. 25 66957, Eppenbrunn, Germany; *www.oirecords.com.*

Scum Fuck Mucke label has some good Oi! and streetpunk items for you this month. First, you get the new LP by SOIFASS from Berlin, Germany. The new full length is called *Es Ist Zeit.* This is good Oi! with polished street rock sensibilities. The singing is gruff and deep with energetic drumming and fast, efficient guitars and bass. The singing is in German and the enthusiasm is infectious!

The Scum Fuck Mucke label presents BERLINER WEISSE with the *Alptraum* long player—as you've ascertained, it's also from Berlin. This shit is brutal hard-as-nails Oi! for you skinheads! The singing is even deeper and more gravel-torn than SOIFASS with the exception of a couple of melodic parts, the music is over-the-top tough-guy Oi!—very good! There's sing-along parts for when you're at the bar and fast-as-fuck bits for punk rock dancing. Give this one a spin!

The third LP on Scum Fuck Mucke is GEWOHNHEIT STRINKER, also from Germany. This *1984* LP has more acoustic parts than either of the other two and the singing is more melodic and pop influenced.

Some songs are quite catchy! For Scum Fuck Mucke label product write: PSF 100709, 46527 Dinslaken, Germany; *www.scumfucktradition.de.*

THE PROWLERS have a CD you need called *Chaos in the City*. This material was recorded in 2001 and is available on Mad Butcher/KOB Records. The lads come out swinging with "Friday Night", about the ritual of letting off steam, drinking, and fighting after the workweek. Next up you get "That's Just the Way it Goes", followed by "Tous Uhs", sung in French. The next song "Through The Years" celebrates the pride of the original skinhead movement in 1969. Read the lyrics: "A lot of things have changed / But on thing still remains / Kids on the street will always take the blame / We're gonna react the only way we know / We're gonna raise hell wherever we go / We're sick of being cussed by people we don't know / Have you ever been to a skinhead show? / Propaganda – politicians always spreading their lies / Joe public will believe all the papers he buys / Through all the years / See through your lies / We carry on – we'll never die / No one can change the way we feel / There are some wounds that will never heal / Trends come and go, but we survive / We carry the pride of 69 / Yeah, we're the boys / We're the underclass / But our movement's strong / And made to last / You see us drinking on the street / A bond like ours will never be beat / Don't have much, but we got our friends / Who will stick to their guns to the very end / You can bet your life / We ain't going away / Our demands are more relevant today / Through all the years / See through your lies / We carry on – we'll never die / No one can change the way we feel / There are some wounds that will never heal / Trends come and go, but we survive / We carry the pride of 69".

THE PROWLERS finish up with a cover of the song "Chaos" by that famous skinhead band THE 4-SKINS. Get PROWLER *Chaos in the City* from Mad Butcher Records, Kurze Geismarst., 6, D – 3703 Gottingen, DE, *www.madbutcher.de, madbutcher@pader-online.de* or KOB Records, Via Cantarane, 63/c, 1 – 37129 Verona, Italy, *www.kobrecords.com, kob@bbk.org*.

Larry and Leslie from Steelcage Records in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania have a rocking new CD for you bums! Steelcage Entertainment presents THE BUMP-N-UGLIES from Detroit, Michigan with their *So Powerful, So Beautiful.* This popular wrestling/rock n' roll crew has been terrorizing drinkers and fighters with their blood lust for eight years. The boys even started their own wrestling federation in 2001. The BUMP-N-UGLIES will rock your world while they sing about wrestling, drinking, and necrophilia. The over-the-top vocals and superior guitar, bass, and drum playing make for a volatile mixture on the *So Powerful, So Beautiful* CD. You get hits like "At the Local Bar"; "Attack the Moondogs", "Heavy Hearts and Cauliflowered Ears", then you get "Where Moron's Dare". This is good shit! Read the words: "I'm stuck in a rut that no three day drunken bender can relieve / Walk the streets at night, go where morons dare / Let me tell you man, it ain't worth the grief / I've been up, and I've been down this excuse of a town / Paid the high price for living low / Hole in my pants and nowhere to go…/ Spent my share of time knocked on my ass / When the check gets cashed it gets spent too fast / So much of so little rubs you the wrong way / I'm not the first to say, "These aren't the days" / I'm not the first one to say, "These aren't the days"".

The BUMP-N-UGLIES finish you off with "Abandoned Soul" and "Loser Leaves Town". Good shit for you wrasslers and rockers! Write to Steelcage Records for BUMP-N-UGLIES, ANTiSEEN, LIMECELL, HAMMERLOCK and RESISTELEROS product! Steelcage, PO Box 29247, Philadelphia, PA 19125; *www.stealcagerecords.com.*

Indianola Records has a strong hardcore CD out this month for you! CASEY JONES from Jacksonville, Florida have *The Few, The Proud, The Crucial* CD prepared for public consumption. This straightedge band has some past and current members of another Jacksonville punk band EVERGREEN TERRACE. CASEY JONES has shouted vocals like TERROR with good sing-a-long choruses and breakdowns. The powerful guitar work along with solid support from the drummer and the bass player make for a potent hardcore mix on this debut CD. Influences from early hardcore bands like YOUTH OF TODAY could be cited with songs like "Know this X", "Strike Hard", "Meaner than a Junkyard Dog", "If You're Smoking Here, You Better Be On Fire", "Pigs is Pigs" and "Pain 101". This band plays with conviction. Get the CASEY JONES CD! Contact Indianola Records at *www.indainolarecords. com.*

Until next month…

See you fucks at the bar!

GUEST COLUMN

by Ben Ditch

Sometimes I think that things are just going to keep on getting worse here in the USA and that I'm never going to move to Canada. I always say that that's what I'm going to do if things get really bad, and yet things steadily worsen, and I'm still here, waiting for some kind of definitive line to

be crossed before I start packing my bags. As if lines aren't being crossed every day. By all rights I should already be there by now. I mean, what am I waiting for? How much worse could things possibly get. No, wait…don't answer that.

I guess maybe I feel like there's something worth fighting for still, but it seems like a losing battle. Running away definitely isn't going to solve anything, but at the same time, I really don't think there's anything that can save us from imminent doom. I guess I'll stick around for a little bit longer. You never know, maybe the soldiers will realize how fucked everything is and come over to our side so we can rise up and fight against the powers that be, like in 1917, but it's unlikely. Everything just seems so hopeless and no one really even seems to care.

The hypocrisy of this whole country and especially the situation we have gotten ourselves into makes me sick to the stomach. Allow me to rant for a moment; We are fighting supposedly for freedom and democracy, but at the same time giving up these rights to protect ourselves? From what? It doesn't make any sense. If protecting America from terrorist threat means giving up our civil and human rights and living in a police state of intimidation where everyone is guilty until proven innocent, then what makes George Bush's America any different from Saddam's Iraq? This is a question that seems to be widely overlooked. How can we attempt to instill democracy in other countries when what we have at home is about as far from a democratic society as you can get? And what are our motives in the first place—just to be nice? That's what they would have us think, but when has this country ever done anything without personal gain as the prime objective?

Increasingly, it's not just the government that disappoints me, but the people too. The fools that really believe the shit that the politicians and newscasters cram down our throats. The ones that say that we have to stand behind the president and the decisions he makes. That we have to make these sacrifices for the greater good, or else "the terrorists" will win. I'm not even so sure anymore that they're not going to re-elect that pig fucker. If voting even counts for shit anymore anyway. For most of these people though, the sacrifice is theoretical. It doesn't affect them. Or to put it another way, the people that support these measures are in most cases not the same people that have to deal with the realities of being fucked with or spied on by homeland security or the police just for looking weird or being openly dissenting of the current state of affairs. Maybe if they were, they wouldn't feel quite the same way about the tactics used to keep the homeland safe.

It's so important to keep ourselves informed, but so hard sometimes, at least for me. I try, but I just can't read the paper every fucking day. Some days I just can't handle more bad news, but most of the time it just seems like there aren't enough hours in the day. I listen to talk radio and read the paper when I can. I even started going on websites like indymedia since we got a free computer at my house, but still I am seemingly always behind on current events. And when I finally do catch up it just makes me so fucking angry an upset that I don't even feel like trying anymore.

Also it's hard to know whom can we trust. What news sources can we rely on? It seems that our own small communities are the best place to start. Word of mouth, local papers, and yes, even fanzines are some of the most invaluable news sources. The mainstream media though is just as full of shit as the politicians, there's some truth in there somewhere, but it's best to take everything with a pinch of salt.

In George Orwell's *1984* old newspapers are destroyed if they contradict what the government currently wants the public to believe, and they are replaced with subtly altered recreations. Thus history is constantly rewritten and the government is never wrong. In reality, the papers change their stories along with the government, conveniently forgetting previous statements and reports. And somehow the public forgets too! So how long before they start replacing old papers and rewriting history? Oh yeah—if you own a copy of *1984.* does that make you a terrorist threat? How long before that book is banned?

"Question everything you've accepted without thinking." —*Crimpshrine*

We get a lot of emails and phone calls asking if we accept submissions, which sorta dumbfounds me still. So to reiterate, *MRR* is what you make it. The vast majority of the material that appears in the zine comes from regular folks like yourself, so please do feel free to submit away, in fact here are some helpful tips:

When doing interviews, keep it short—fewer than 1500 words is a good guide—most bands don't have that much to say. There are always exceptions of course, but come on, get to the point, don't dilly-dally around. Make it interesting, challenge bands on their lyrics or zines on their writings—don't be afraid to be confrontational! Don't make it read like a bunch of promo bullshit fluff! And send tons of graphics! Band photos, logos, and graphics from your records—and please, please don't scan them and put them on a disk unless you know what you're doing!! All graphics should be scanned at at least 300 dpi and never, never ever 72 dpi! You're better off making a photocopy and sending it in than sending us garbage like some 72 dpi jpeg!

I would really, really, really like to see more scene reports in *MRR* again— seriously, want to know the easiest way to get your band/zine/show space etc. in *MRR*? Do a scene report! Try to be as thorough as possible—but don't worry if you miss some things, you can cover 'em next time! In addition to bands, zines, record stores and all the usual punk flair, try to mention other things that folx from out of town might want to hit up if they come to your town—tasty eats, good coffee, cheap booze store etc. Once again, send mountains of graphics! I'd really like to assemble a regular cast of scene reporters that we could rely upon to give us the dirt every month.

We've started running photo spreads recently, and I'd really like to do it more often. So if you've been taking pictures for some time and would like to share them with the world, send away! However, unless you include a SASE don't expect to get them back!

Oh, the guest column—everyone wants to be a columnist it seems. All those years of reading about Mykel's sexual adventures, and suddenly people start to believe *MRR* columnist=getting mountains of easy sex! If only it were true!! It's honestly more along the lines of the title of that MRR comp *They Don't Get Paid, They Don't Get Laid…* but back to guest columns. Basically, have something to say! Make it interesting, if we really like what you have to say, and you're persistent you might get a column, though the sex will more than likely not follow. What will probably happen is Floyd will come over to your house, eat all your cake, make fun of your hometown, watch your cable, drink your whiskey and taunt your dog till it cries. But having Floyd over is sorta like having a real celebrity in your home (at least in his mind) anyway, so it's cool.

Articles, boy could we use 'em! Anything from well researched, well thought out articles that look behind the scenes of and into the dirty secrets of the US government, to the importance of punk fashion. Make it interesting! I'd also really like to see more people contributing to our news section—especially those of you who can put current events into focus and provide informational background on what the hell is really going on! Hey, in journalism school? What an easy way to get clips! If you're interested, please do get in touch!

Lastly, to answer your question "can I write reviews for *MRR*?" Well, let me ask

you "do you live in the Bay Area?" If yes, then maybe. If no, then no, sorry.

I think that about covers it, but if you have questions or comments please do feel free to get in touch. Oh yeah, and no prmosies that everything that gets sent it will run, sorry!

Well despite all that, there is one more thing I'd like to mention. Since Arwen recently announced her departure from being a coordinator at *MRR*, I've been thinking a lot about what I'm doing with my life, and if my place is really here. It's been quite a long internal struggle for me. I love *MRR*, I love working here more than anything I've ever done, but lately something just feels missing. Like there's some sort of void within me, like I should be directing my passions and energies into something more productive, something more real. I just feel really frustrated and stifled sitting here, cranking out these zines month after month—I just don't feel the connection with the people like I should. I mean, I've got so much to offer to the world, and just writing about music and politics just doesn't quite seem to cut it anymore. I really feel like I need to be out there, meeting people one on one—sharing my wisdom and complete genius in a far warmer medium than the written word can ever convey—the spoken word.

I know, I know—it sounds crazy. But I really think that I can pull it off. I've already done a few readings here and there, mostly at cafés around town and at a couple of shows and so far have gotten a fairly positive response. I like to think of my readings as one part serious commentary, one part stand-up. Get 'em laughing, but hit them with something to think about. More than anything, it really helps me to feel that connection with the punk community when I see the reactions in their faces, and listen to the feedback during the question and answer sessions. It's just so much more real to me than typing out a column every month could ever be.

I'm finding more and more of my time is dedicated to writing new spoken word pieces and planning shows. I've also started doing some guerilla spoken word shows. I recently set up my milk carton in the middle of the Bechtel building downtown. With word as my weapon, I condemned them for being the irresponsible corporate death machine that they are, in a piece called "Bolivia, Nos Gusta El Agua!" I was drug kicking and screaming from their lobby right at the climax of the piece and thrown in jail for the evening for disorderly conduct, causing me to miss the reviews deadline at *MRR*. It was at that moment that I realized that I had a choice to make—*MRR* or my new passion.

I'll be 30 years old this year, and I feel that given my new career path it's time for me to move on, so it is here that I'd like to state, that I too, like Arwen, am stepping down from the holding the reigns of *MRR*—it's time to pass them onto a new generation of folks. Basically what this means is that once the new coordinator is settled in, I'll be taking the money I recently was awarded after I was struck by a car and traveling across the USA back reading selections from my writings. Next month I should have it all booked up—I'll be jumping on shows mostly, saying my piece, enlightening young punks with my wisdom across the nation. I've even been thinking about, and have looked into doing a tour of Europe. I'm a little uneasy about it, especially since I only speak English with any amount of fluency, but I think my rage, my incredible wit and my fiery delivery will drive the message home. Besides, most foreigners speak English anyway. Certainly, I do feel a tinge of unease starting my whole life over, and about leaving *MRR* behind, but I think it's my time.

So, who's taking over? It's a secret. You just have to wait and find out. It's someone you'll love though, I can promise you that much.

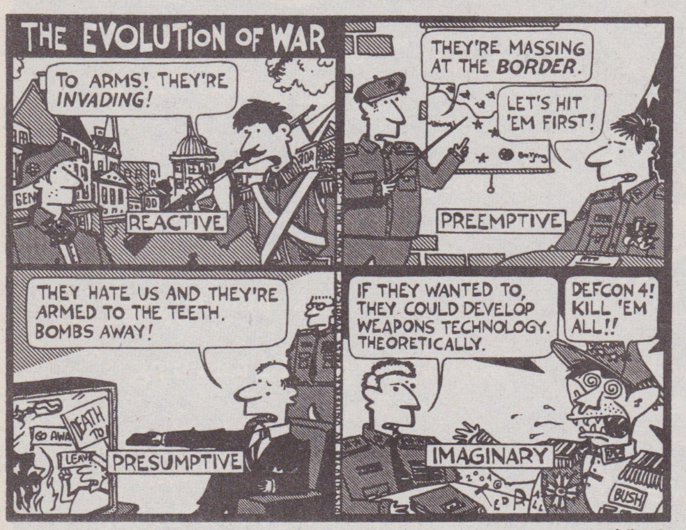
Endnotes:

• Writing column in a timely and current manner is so hard, I mean I would love to discuss my conspiracy theories about Haiti, the CIA and the Aristide government with you, but I write this in February, and the cover reads April, but you Fools will probably be reading this in mid to late March. By that time Haiti will probably be the 51st state, or at least another puppet state like Afghanistan and the soon to be "independent" Iraq.

• Sure, vote George Bush out of office, but then what? And who is your choice? John Kerry? Yeash!! Anyone else as frustrated with this mess as I am? I would like to put together a special issue about the American Presidential elections this year, so suggestions, ideas, and submissions are welcome! Get in touch! Be certain to check back here for more info on what will be happening with this issue.

• We are, in fact, still looking for another coordinator, if you are interested, you should get in touch.

• As always, contact me via the *MRR* PO Box or via mikethorn@maximumrocknroll.com



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Nero Fiddled While Rome Burned

zine = $1 U.S. $2 Elsewhere. (No checks)

BY **JACOB DAVID**

PO BOX 3050 EUREKA, CA 95502

9/11 = THE AMERICAN REICHSTAG FIRE
& GEORGE BUSH JUNIOR = ADOLF HITLER
ON CRACK & A COLD CASE OF CORONA!

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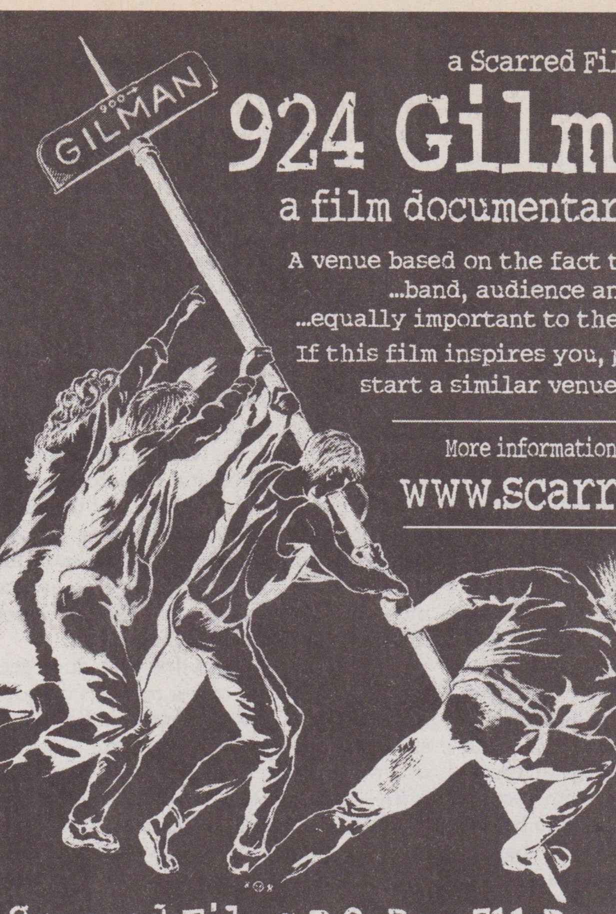

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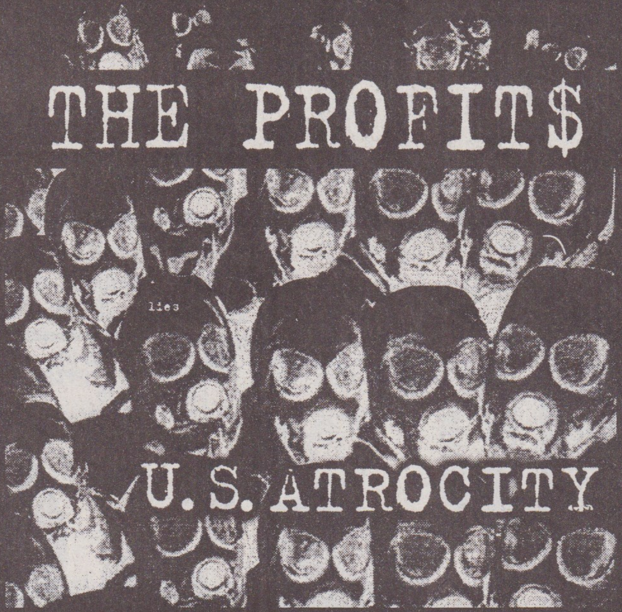
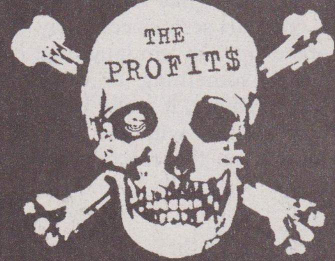


What's the price of war?



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MRR NEWS

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compiled by:
Arwen Curry

S.F. SUES OVER LEGALITY OF SAME-SEX MARRIAGES

City asks judge to rule that state's ban is discriminatory, unconstitutional

San Francisco officials went on the attack Thursday in their fight over same-sex weddings, suing the state on the grounds that laws defining marriage as between a man and woman illegally discriminate against gays and lesbians.

In bringing the Superior Court suit, officials also tried to gain an edge over anti-gay marriage forces by naming as defendants the two groups that have sued the city, the Proposition 22 Legal Defense and Education Fund and Campaign for California Families.

The city's suit comes as the same-sex marriage opponents head to court today trying to persuade a judge to halt the stream of gay and lesbian weddings at San Francisco City Hall. So far they've been unsuccessful in getting a judge to issue a stay.

"The city and county of San Francisco is going on the offensive today in protecting the mayor's actions," City Attorney Dennis Herrera said in announcing the suit.

He said city officials want to make sure the courts rule on the cornerstone of Mayor Gavin Newsom's defense—that state laws defining marriage as between a man and woman violate the state constitution's guarantee of equal protection.

The city also charges that the state laws run afoul of the constitution's guarantees of due process and privacy.

Newsom said he backed Herrera's decision to sue the state. "It goes to the core of the question, and our belief that we're in the right from a constitutional perspective," he said.

State Attorney General Bill Lockyer issued a statement saying it was his duty to defend state laws that prohibit same-sex marriages.

"As a lifelong defender of civil rights, due process and equal protection for all, I do not personally support policies that give lesser legal rights and responsibilities to committed same-sex couples than those provided to heterosexual couples," the Democratic attorney general said.

He said that is why he has supported extending benefits through domestic partnerships and civil union statutes.

"But the people of California have spoken," Lockyer said. "State law prohibits the recognition of same-sex marriages."

Voters banned same-sex marriages under Proposition 22 in 2000. The Alliance Defense Fund, the group representing the Proposition 22 Legal Defense and Education Fund, issued a statement saying that the city's suit was an "implicit concession that the city lacks legal authority. It is trying to retroactively validate its lawsuit activity."

Richard Ackerman, one of the lawyers for Campaign for California Families, said the city should have filed suit in the first place, before officials began issuing same-sex licenses. He also said Lockyer should recuse himself from the case because, he said, Newsom called the attorney general last week before the city acted.

Former California Supreme Court Justice Joseph Grodin said the city may have filed the suit just in case the anti-gay marriage groups convince a judge that Newsom acted illegally under a section of the constitution barring state agencies from refusing to apply a state law.

"It serves as backup insurance so that the constitutionality of the statute will somehow get litigated," said Grodin, who teaches constitutional law at the University of California's Hastings College of the Law in San Francisco.

Both sides are expected to wrestle over several issues in court today. The city is seeking to consolidate the two anti-gay marriage groups' lawsuits and have both heard before Superior Court Judge James Warren. Earlier this week, Warren refused to issue a stay immediately barring city officials from issuing same-sex licenses. He has scheduled a March 29 hearing in the case.

Lawyers for the Proposition 22 Legal Defense and Education Fund said they will make their own request to have both suits combined and heard today before Superior Court Judge Ronald Quidachay.

"If you think this has been a procedural nightmare," Ackerman said, "you haven't seen anything at all."

A total of 3,034 same-sex couples have been issued marriage licenses since Feb. 12, and there were long lines at City Hall again Thursday.

Outside, about a dozen members of an East Coast-based evangelical group, Repent America, spent part of the afternoon on the steps of the building protesting same-sex marriage. Aside from some angry words from the crowd, there was no confrontation.

Earlier in the afternoon, a few members of Repent America tried to block entry to the clerk's office so that people seeking marriage licenses couldn't get in. That lasted about 15 minutes before police arrived to remove them.

One evangelist also attempted a citizen's arrest.

Volunteer officiant Bill Jones said he was marrying a couple on the mayor's balcony when he noticed a stranger looking on. Jones asked the man to take a picture of him with the happy couple, and the man obliged.

The man proceeded to follow Jones down the hall, saying he was performing a citizen's arrest.

"I thought he was kidding," said Jones, of San Rafael. "I was giving him all this campy stuff, saying, 'Yes, arrest me—I love a man in uniform.' "

When Jones realized the man was serious, he told him that he wouldn't go anywhere with him without a police officer.

The man apparently was unable to round one up, and Jones continued on his fifth day of marrying gay couples.

by Harriet Chiang, *San Francisco Chronicle*

WAREHOUSE SPACE EVICTION IN PROVIDENCE

It has officially happened again...After the Fort Thunder eviction many people found new warehouse spaces to make into homes, and to have shows. About 56 people lived in 244 Oak St. and 71 Troy St. in Olneyville, Providence, and as of Friday. January 23, they were all evicted.

There was a total of about seven show spaces housed in these two buildings, including The Pink Rabbit, The Bakery, The Sickle, Valhalla, The Box of Knives (formerly known as the Candle Factory), The Providence Civic Center, and The Munch Haus. Most of the DIY shows in Providence were happening at these spaces. Some nights there would be more than one show going on in the two buildings. The Sickle had the R.A.M.B.O. show in August of 2002 that finally started putting Providence back on the map. The Pink Rabbit and The Bakery were responsible for the 800-person Halloween show this past October, which featured about 20 bands. And the Pink Rabbit recently housed one out of the three east coast shows DSB played, which was absolutely amazing. Over the course of time, many amazing bands played in all these spaces—listing them all here would be impossible.

Aside from the show/living spaces listed above, the buildings also had five spaces where people lived and did not have shows, and two Hispanic churches congregated there.

These buildings were the testimony of the Providence scene: diverse, supportive, and tolerant. Every kind of shows was booked: all ranges of punk/hardcore, metal, grind, noise, indie, experimental, and performance. People here in town are very supportive of each other, and a big mix of people go to shows (well, not at all of them). People get along—never a fight, no bullshit. These were our show spaces. Bands wanted to play there, they were not asking for clubs. Now we have nothing. And 56 people do not have homes.

The eviction was due to "unsafe living conditions." Apparently we were an 8 out of 10 imminent danger of fire. Someone placed a call to the city coding officials that there were people living in the buildings (which is illegal because the buildings were not up to code and not zoned for residential. The coding official stopped by 71 Troy St. on Jan 8 and spoke to someone residing in the Box of Knives. The coding official said that the buildings were going to be condemned and all of the utilities were to be cut either on Friday or Monday.

We all met on Thursday night, not quite knowing what to think...was it just one building or both? What the hell was going on? How were they tipped off? Who tipped them off? Etc. We were awoken on Friday morning to the news that the inspectors would be in our homes in the matter of one hour. The inspectors included: the Fire Marshall, the police, the coding officials, and zoning officials. They had video cameras, cameras, notepads, etc. They inspected most of the spaces. The landlord had promised us that he would do anything he could to bring the place up to code and stop us from having to move. He was full of shit.

Although we had some down time before the last crunch—we were all kind of starting to hope we were in the clear because we hadn't really heard much. We knew we had to be out, but we didn't know when. Then on Tuesday, Jan 20, we found out the property manager was coming over with his demolition crew to tear down our walls. None of us were even close to being done packing, and most of us wanted to keep our building materials. We had a crew on Tuesday night of probably 100 people helping us pack, move, and disassemble. It was like an Amish barn-raising, but in reverse.

Late on Tuesday night we decided to form a protest in front of the entrances when the demolition crew showed up so they could not enter the buildings. This was successful in that it got our property manager to actually show up. At this point the mainstream media was eating it up. Finally, at 8:30 am, someone got through to the city and found out that the officials were coming over at 11 am to condemn and lock the building. This is when shit got really insane. People just started moving stuff to the sidewalk, having nowhere to put it, but not wanting to leave it in the house. Many animals were housed in those buildings and they all had to be moved as well—often times separate from their parents.

At 11 the inspectors came, but they didn't lock the doors. There was a housing court hearing and the judge declared us a state of emergency. He said that we had until Friday at 5 pm to get all of our stuff out and he said there was to be a 24-hour fire watch. Keep in mind that we didn't receive official eviction notices until Tuesday the 20th but those notices were false in that they stated that none of us had leases, when in fact many spaces did. So finally, on Friday the 23rd' they came and locked up our building, with many things still inside.

That's the end of that. Our DIY spaces in Providence are gone. 56 people are homeless. Our only hope is that something great will rise up from this mess. *—This news flash brought to you by Jess Threat and Anne Gaelle.*

CONVENTION PLAN PUTS PROTESTERS BLOCKS AWAY

by Rick Klein, *Boston Globe (excerpted)*

Protesters at this summer's Democratic National Convention in Boston may be confined to a cozy triangle of land off Haymarket Square, blocked off from the FleetCenter and convention delegates by a maze of Central Artery service roads, MBTA train tracks, and a temporary parking lot holding scores of buses and media trucks.

Under a preliminary plan floated by convention organizers, the "free-speech zone" would be a small plot bounded by Green Line tracks and North Washington Street, in an area that until recently was given over to the elevated artery. The zone would hold as few as 400 of the several thousand protesters who are expected in Boston in late July.

"The area looks a little silly, to be honest with you," said Urszula Masny-Latos, executive director of the National Lawyers Guild's Massachusetts chapter. "People will not be able to express their concerns with whatever will be happening, because no one will have access to delegates. No one will be heard, and the area is just too small."

Officials with the National Lawyers Guild and the ACLU of Massachusetts plan to meet with Boston Police Department representatives in the weeks to come to ask that the plan be changed. Boston police say no final decisions will be made for months, and stressed that they're open to input.

The disappointment in the preliminary plans is likely to be the start of a protracted battle that has the potential to end up in court, as did a similar dispute at the 2000 Democratic convention in Los Angeles. Relegated to a parking lot blocks from the convention arena, protesters sued, and less than a month before that convention began, a federal judge ruled that the designated area was unconstitutional. Organizers were forced to move the area to a parking lot directly across the street from an arena entrance, in keeping with earlier federal court rulings that any legal demonstration be allowed within "sight and sound" of its intended audience.

In NYC, where the Republicans will hold their convention this year, police are anticipating tens of thousands of protesters. No plans have been made for where protests will be allowed, but civil liberties groups have already raised concerns about potential police tactics.

Some observers have predicted fewer protesters in Boston, in part because many of the groups that targeted delegates in Los Angeles are united in their dislike of President Bush. Still, civil liberties groups anticipate several thousand protesters here, with the war in Iraq, trade, and the environment among their top issues. In addition, several city unions—most notably the Boston Police Patrolmen's Association—are threatening to picket outside the convention if their contracts with the city aren't settled by July.

Being tucked into a small lot, where views of the FleetCenter are likely to be blocked by buses and a forest of TV satelite trucks would render demonstrations virtually worthless, protest advocates said.

Convention organizers plan to ask groups who wish to protest near the FleetCenter to apply for permits that would allow them into the free-speech zone at designated times. Protesters will be allowed outside the zone, but civil liberties groups say those outside the designated area are likely to be given less leeway in staging demonstrations. Police say they have not yet determined policies about protesters outside the zone.

Carol Rose, executive director of the ACLU of Massachusetts, said that if the preliminary "free-speech zone" is the only area protesters can use without fear of arrest or harassment, it will almost certainly be challenged in court.

"We don't want it to be a free-speech pen," Rose said.

She said the ACLU will push instead for a range of areas, situated in such a way that delegates have to walk past them on their way into the FleetCenter.

Rose said she would like small groups of protesters to be allowed to rotate into the immediate vicinity of the FleetCenter, in the area convention organizers want to restrict to credentialed delegates, convention workers, and media. In addition, security fences should be transparent, so those holding signs outside can be seen and heard, she said.

"The more outlets for speech that can be created, the better the convention will go, and the fewer legal issues there will be," Rose said.

Mariellen Burns, a spokeswoman for the Boston Police Department, said Boston police are committed to accommodating protesters. "You have to find a balance of doing it in the best way to maintain order," she said.

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JOURNALISTS UNDER FIRE

"I think war is a dangerous place, and I think that nobody would kill a journalist intentionally."
George W. Bush

"The death of José Couso was a premeditated crime, an attack on journalists to prevent us from telling the story of something the US has tried to hide from the start of the war: the slaughter of civilians."
Mónica G. Prieto, Baghdad correspondent for the Spanish newspaper *El Mundo*.

The invasion and occupation of Iraq has certainly had its share of crimes and atrocities, any of which should be cause enough to have Bush and Blair brought before the Hague, if the mechanisms of international justice could actually bring the powerful to heel, beginning with the war itself, which, as noted here at Counterpunch and elsewhere, was a crime against peace, the worst possible crime, as it constitutes a prelude to all other crimes. As valuable and important as it is, the immediate body count from the war doesn't begin to tell the whole story.

Indeed, even many of us opposed to the war usually fail to grasp the fullest dimension of its unseen, long-term sheer criminality, for it goes far beyond the direct victims of bombing raids and the ongoing counterinsurgency by US troops: they have lain waste to a entire country, setting back for decades its possibilities for development and progress, ravaging its health system, shortening its life expectancy by impairing its general health and well-being, inflicting deep, traumatic psychological wounds and truncating the life possibilities of Iraqis for generations: in a word, genocide.

Though Iraqis are the main victims, journalists also suffered their share of losses, and it should be remembered that journalists are defined as civilians in the Geneva Conventions. It is essential to defend journalists in war zones from the attacks of those who would seek to cover up their crimes by silencing reporters and thereby depriving the world of first-hand knowledge of what's really happening in war.

This is especially true for non-US journalists, as they are less prone to simply pass on the servings of mess-hall slop dished out by the US military, but called "reporting" by US retail media outlets. To stop future wars, we must work to fully bring home the horror it entails and defend those in the field working tell the truth.

Given Washington's hostility towards media it does not control (witness Rumsfeld and the Arab satellite stations), the issue is crucial for them and for us, because more wars are coming down the pike, friends, and they would like nothing better than to make the next invasion off-limits to anyone not "embedded," and thus prevent ghastly pictures of the victims from making the rounds on the net, Al-Jazeera or anywhere else.

The death of José Couso, a TV cameraman for Tele 5, is a case in point on the treatment meted out to troublesome witnesses to the outrages of the US Empire. It also tells us something about the impunity demanded by US forces, its insistence on the freedom to act with no restraints or accountability for the consequences of its actions, in effect turning the entire planet into a free-fire zone. Moreover, the nature of the one-way "alliance" between the US and Spain, sealed at the Bush-Blair-Aznar summit in the Azores Islands three days before the war, comes into plain and sordid view. Most important, though, the mighty struggle for justice being waged by the family, friends and colleagues of Jose Couso should serve as an inspiration and example for all.

As the fall of Baghdad approached, some 300 international journalists were based in the Palestine Hotel, on the eastern bank of the Tigris River. They had relocated from the Al-Rashid when CNN left and moved to the Palestine. Most reporters assumed that the presence of CNN would provide a sort of cover, that the US military wouldn't bomb CNN. José Couso and reporter Jon Sistiaga, reporting the war for Spanish TV channel Tele 5, followed suit.

Early in the morning of April 8, the day before the fall of Baghdad, a tank with the Third Infantry Division's Fourth Brigade, 64th Armor Regiment standing on the Al-Jumuriya bridge over the Tigris River aims its turret and knocks out a camera on the roof of the offices of Abu-Dhabi Television. >From room 1403 in the Palestine across the river, José Couso's camera captures the tank carefully aiming at the "target," even though Abu-Dhabi TV had already given the coordinates of its offices to the Pentagon before the war.

Some time later, Al-Jazeera comes under attack. Though in a more conflictive area, they had also alerted the Pentagon to the exact GPS position of their Baghdad bureau. To no avail: a missile takes the life of Tarek Ayyoub, a Jordanian reporter with the network. Al-Jazeera is once again a target for US forces, as its bureau in Kabul had been hit in November 2001.

Later that morning, a lull in the fighting reigns in the district of Baghdad immediately surrounding the Palestine Hotel, where, as the Pentagon knows the international media is based. Throughout the early morning, US tanks and planes have been cleaning up the last scattered remnants of Iraqi forces still putting up some find of fight, almost entirely on the western bank of the Tigris river, where the presidential palaces and ministries are found. A calm seems to take hold, as no shooting occurs for a good while. The Spanish reporter, Carlos Hernández of Antena 3, says that they seemed to have run out of targets. Some reporters go inside and begin to file reports, and many cameras stop shooting. Sistiaga: "I even left the balcony because I saw that a whole half-hour had gone by with a single shot, and it seemed that the battle was at a halt." But not José Couso, who continues to aim his camera at the tanks on the Al-Jumuriya bridge.

Then, Couso sees and records an Abrams M1A1 tank as it swings its turret round and points toward the Palestine; it pauses, then fires a single round at the hotel, some three quarters of a mile away, striking the 15th floor. This is the third attack on the media of the day, and it's not yet quite 12 noon. Couso himself and the Ukrainian reporter for Reuters, Tara Protsyuk, are struck by debris and shrapnel. Protsyuk dies almost immediately from his wounds. Severely wounded in the leg, Couso is rushed to the hospital by his partner Jon Sistiaga and Mexican cameraman Jorge Pliego, in scenes shown on Spanish TV. Couso holds on for a couple of hours, but succumbs to a massive state of shock, though doctors have done all they could despite the chaos and sheer number of Iraqi civilians coming in.

The explanations were murky and contradictory. Clearly underwhelmed by the need to explain what would be a minor incident in the victorious conquest of Baghdad, media general Vincent Brooks in Qatar lied, using the all-purpose "responding to enemy fire" defense. Radio communications up and down the chain of command, as overheard by embedded reporters, and a personal appeal to journalists from brigade commander Col. David
Perkins suggested that there had been an attempt to prevent the Palestine from being targeted, but somehow it did not succeed, if in earnest (See report by the Committee to Protect Journalists: www.cpj.org/Briefings/2003/palestine_hotel/palestine_hotel.html).

The Spanish media erupted. Appearances by Prime Minister Aznar and Foreign Minister Ana Palacio were met with the protests of cameramen and women, who laid down their cameras and refused to film their press conferences. Immediate protests by colleagues, friends and family were organized in front of the US embassy in Madrid. The family filed a suit in Spanish court charging a war crime under Spanish and international law against Sergeant Shawn Gibson, who fired the deadly shot, Captain Philip Wolford, commander of the tank unit, and Lieutenant Colonel Philip Decamp, commander of the 64th Armor Regiment.

The CPJ report is actually somewhat charitable, concluding that the death of Couso and Protsyuk was "avoidable," though not "deliberate." Their Spanish colleagues have a clearer vision, and mince no words in spelling it out. Jon Sistiaga: "I think they deliberately fired on the journalists' hotel First

The Death of José Couso in Baghdad

they take out Al-Jazeera, then Abu-Dhabi a half hour later, and a half hour after that, why not, with the same tank they shoot at the hotel housing the rest of the international media." Monica G. Prieto, once more: "They'd been holding those positions since the early hours of the morning, they must have had us extremely well located."

A month later, Spanish Prime Minister José María Aznar was in Washington to reassure Bush of his fealty. At a joint press conference, a Spanish journalist had the temerity to disturb George with the issue of José Couso, and whether the US should apologize, whereupon Bush half-murmured the hideous malapropism found at the head of this article. Aznar then said that the US recognized that it had been a mistake, which was simply false, as the US has done no such thing. That should be enough, Aznar stated, showing a clear willingness to sacrifice as many of his countrymen as necessary on the altar of loyalty to his imperial master (See www.cnn.com/. Oh, and Aznar probably wanted to send down the memory hole his own reception of Tariq Aziz at the presidential palace in Madrid in 1998, or the meeting as late as February 2000 of then Spanish Foreign Minister Abel Matutes with then Iraqi Foreign Minister, Mohammed Said Al-Sahaf. Or the negotiations for an oil deal until 2000.

Foreign Minister Palacio does get Colin Powell to promise an "investigation," the results of which are sent in August. The Spanish Foreign Ministry sends the Couso family two typewritten pages with no heading or signature, with no translation into Spanish. Therein, a new explanation arises: a spotter for Iraqi forces appeared to be using the Palestine Hotel (See http://www.josecouso.info/, bottom of the page).

Falsely claiming that US forces were under "heavy attack," the shot at the hotel therefore constituted "self-defense." More lies: "the Palestine Hotel and the areas immediately around it [were utilized] as a platform for military operations." The 300 journalists at the hotel insist time and again that no Iraqi soldiers or militia had ever been operating from either the hotel or its surroundings.

Even more ominously perhaps, the text takes an "I-told-you-so" approach, asserting that since journalists were warned before the war that Baghdad would be a "dangerous place," well, what do you expect. In another words, US forces cannot be expected to comply with the requirements of the Geneva conventions to distinguish between military and civilian targets.

The Spanish government declared that it was satisfied with the half-baked "investigation" by the Pentagon and declared the issue closed. It has treated any further questions raised about the case with contempt and annoyance, as if they were mere insolence.

But the struggle goes on. The family, friends and colleagues of José Couso, defying the pain and loss they have been forced to bear, have mounted a unrelenting campaign to demand justice for José, starting with a full investigation of the events of April 8, and a trial for the killers of José Couso and Tara Protsyuk. Dozens of Spanish towns and even regions have called for justice, and demonstrations are held every week in front of the headquarters of Aznar's ruling PP party, and on the eighth of every month in front of the US embassy in Madrid.

José Couso was an accomplished professional with immense personal dedication to what he saw as his mission: to tell the truth with his camera and pierce through the official line with the simplicity yet depth of images. Jon Sistiaga says: "he wanted to go beyond the sheer news event. He tried to make

the images speak for themselves so that the journalist has to say as little as possible." In the days before the start of the some reporters are nervous about staying in Baghdad, but Couso urges them to stay. Carlos Hernández: "Couso told us 'you've got to stay, we have to be here to tell people what's happening, we can't let there be a war without any witnesses.' " José's testament is a 24-minute stretch of video wherein he captures the war crime that ended his own life.

In a public statement, the family of José Couso ask a question that not only exposes the masters of war, but also poses a challenge to us all: "If they're capable of murdering a journalist with credentials like our brother in the very center of Baghdad in full view of the international community, what won't they do to civilians or supposed enemies who get in their way?"

Story by James Hollander, James is a translator living in Madrid. He can be contacted at anti-war@ya.com.

The campaign by family, friends and colleagues of José Couso is at www.josecouso.info. Those visiting Madrid are urged to join the Tuesday demos at noon at the HQ of the PP on Calle Genova, and in front of the US embassy on the eighth of every month at eight in the evening.

Morales, Mexico Update

IMC Volunteer
Tuesday, Jan. 20, 2004

In view of all of these events and the current conditions of Tlalnepantla, where the majority of the population is now in exile, families have been separated, and many more people have been disappeared, international support is crucial. This is a detailed summary of the situation and background information about Tlalnepantla.

Tlalnepantla, Morelos is a small municipality with no more than 4,000 inhabitants, located approximately 2 hours from the state capital, Cuernavaca, and 45 minutes from Mexico City. Despite the geographical proximity to urban centers, Tlalnepantla has remained somewhat untouched by neoliberalist development, and continues to practice rural traditions. The economy of Tlalnepantla is widely based on the growth and sale of nopal, an edible cactus. The price of one paca of nopales (3,000 nopales) ranges between the equivalent of approximately two and three hundred US dollars, depending on the season. Because of this, the people of Tlalnepantla live in drastically uncertain economic conditions.

Historically, the town officials of Tlalnepantla have been elected through a traditional process called usos y costumbres (uses and customs), in which a town assembly reached consensus on who would be the Municipal President. After this process, that person would register with the Institutionalized Revolutionary Party, (the PRI, who ruled Mexico for 70 years until the elections of 2000 when Vincente Fox, of the National Action Party, the PAN, won the federal elections.) In turn, the PRI would sponsor the person elected through usos y costumbres as their candidate in the formal elections. This ensured that the Municipal President of Tlalnepantla would always be registered as a candidate supported by the PRI, and at the same time, allowed the town to continue to use their traditional electoral process.

Until 1970, the elected officials of Tlalnepantla did not receive a salary, reflecting that their role was still one of service to the town and not of authority.

A conflict began this past electoral period of July 2003, when the candidate that was elected through usos y costumbres, Conrado Pacheco, refused to register with the PRI for the upcoming formal elections. Upon his refusal, the PRI responded by sponsoring another candidate, Elias Osorio, already notorious for dishonest practices. In the past, there had only been the candidate in the formal elections who was elected through usos y costumbres, and perhaps one other candidate from another party. This guaranteed that the person who had won through usos y costumbres would also win the formal elections, thus taking office as Municipal President. However, in the most recent elections, due to the refusal of Conrado Pacheco to register with the PRI, the entrance of Elias Osorio on behalf of the PRI, and the registration of 6 candidates of different political parties, there was mass confusion in the municipality. In addition, Osorio, the candidate of the PRI bought the votes of many townspeople for the equivalent of between 50 and 100 US dollars, which given the economic situation of the town is a large quantity of money. Osorio also gave water pumps to those who promised to vote for him, which for many families is something that most families would never have had access to. Another tactic that Osorio used to win the elections was to register the deceased and their votes were counted in favor of Osorio in the elections.

In the elections, Elias Osorio won with a total of approximately 400 votes, which would be officially considered that he has the support of 10% of the population, however a large number of those votes were the result of bribery and falsehoods. Another factor in the victory of Osorio was the mass confusion in the community that resulted in little participation in the elections. The result of the victory of Elias Osorio as a candidate of the PRI who was not elected for usos and costumbres was a great amount of tension in the municipality, because the majority of people did not accept or recognize him as Municipal President.

In response, the other 6 candidates that had run in the elections, their supporters, and those that had not voted united in a common movement to manifest their rejection of Elias Osorio. In October, the town organized a plebiscite in which 1,357 townspeople voted in support of the recognition of usos y costumbres in Tlalnepantla. In contrast there was one vote for Elias Osorio. This was an overwhelming reflection of the sentiments of the people of Tlalnepantla and the illegitimacy of Osorio. November 1, 2003, the day that Elias Osorio was to have taken office as the President, those who opposed Osorio took over the presidential building and would not allow him to enter. From then on, there were people guarding the building 24 hours a day in order to prevent Osorio from taking office.

On November 26, the people of Tlalnepantla marched in Cuernavaca, asking for the disappearance of powers of Elias Osorio in Tlalnepantla. The march went through the center of the city, and proceeded to take over the highway between Cuernavaca and Mexico City. The government responded with brutal repression just as the demonstrators were beginning to retreat from the roadblock that they had created to generate public interest. There were more than 70 people detained without any charges, and many were seriously wounded as a result of the violence of the police and tear gas used indiscriminately against men, women, children, and the elderly present in the highway takeover.

After this march, many organizations offered solidarity to the people of Tlalnepantla, and the movement began to grow. The people of Tlalnepantla who oppose Elias Osorio were able to arrive at a table of negotiations with Osorio, the executive government of the state, and three representatives of the Congress of the state. There were four sessions of negotiations, and Osorio offered to open certain positions of local government to those who insisted on the use of usos y costumbres. The representatives of the movement of Tlalnepantla would not accept his proposals, insisting that Osorio be removed from office and that the town have the power to elect their officials according to their traditions.

In the last negotiations, on January 7, 2004, the people of Tlalnepantla decided to break the negotiations with Osorio, stating that to continue would imply recognition of his authority, and declared an autonomous municipality.

The government of the state, which is controlled by the PAN, refused to recognize the autonomy of Tlalnepantla, declaring such actions to be illegal, despite the fact that this right is defined in the articles 39 and 115 of the Mexican Constitution. The secretary of the Federal Government, Santiago Creel, announced that he would not permit the creation of any more autonomous municipalities in the country. This affects many communities, including people in the states of Oaxaca, Guerrero, and Chiapas, all of which currently have movements demanding the recognition of their constitutional rights to determining their form of government.

On Sunday, January 10, there was a ceremony declaring autonomy in Tlalnepantla, and the prior Municipal President, who had served the town from 2000 to 2003, gave the keys of the Presidency and the inventory of the Presidency to the Popular Autonomous Council of Tlalnepantla.

The government responded to the declaration of autonomy by sending more than 700 police to invade Tlalnepantla on January 14, 2003. The representatives of the Popular Autonomous Council and all of their supports were very firm in their decision to defend their town against an invasion, in sight of the repression that they experienced during the march on November 26, and were already prepared to defend against the police attack. The government's response, however, was immense, and in addition to the 700 police forces, snipers and helicopters assisted in the invasion. According to the official report, there was one man killed, Gregorio Sanchez, an inhabitant of Tlalnepantla. He was shot fatally in the mouth in the central plaza. Other versions, according to the townspeople of Tlalnepantla, say that there are many more dead, already disappeared and buried by the police in the mountains surrounding the town. The government has prohibited the passage of human rights groups to enter the mountains in search of such casualties.

Currently in Tlalnepantla there are no more than 200 people, the rest of the population has been displaced due to fear of further repression. They have fled to surrounding towns, and many families suspect that there are still people hiding in the mountains. In the days immediately following the invasion, many people fled to the mountains; 3 women gave birth, and one woman lost her baby due to the harsh conditions.

Also, during the invasion and in the days immediately following, 23 people were detained and are currently being held in a state prison.

On Sunday, January 18, a human rights commission was organized to investigate the conditions in Tlalnepantla and the surrounding mountains. The group brought food, clothes, water, and medicine to the refugees of Tlalnepantla that are currently staying the neighboring town of Tlayacapan. Upon arriving at the entrance of Tlalnepantla, police refused the passage of the human rights commission, accompanied by the people of San Salvador Atenco, Mexico (who in 2001-2002 successfully defended the sale of their farming lands against the proposal to build an airport.) The police requested to search all of the men in assurance of their entrance. Many men from the human rights commission got off of the bus to consent to the search. However, the situation only escalated, largely between the police, the people of San Salvador Atenco, human rights observers who had gotten off of the bus, and a small group of people from Tlalnepantla who support Elias Osorio. When the large majority of human rights observers were attempting to retreat in hopes of deescalating the situation, the police attacked those who had gotten off of the bus. Several people from Atenco were seriously wounded, by blows to the head and legs. The police also used tear gas on the whole crowd. The police also forced the driver from Atenco out of his truck and the vehicle was confiscated. In the moments that followed, the police began to attack the bus of human rights observers and social organizations, who had already begun to retreat. Three residents of Asheville, North Carolina, and one resident of Minneapolis, Minnesota, who were participating in the human rights commission, were on the bus when the police attacked, breaking the windows and using tear gas against all of those present, including two children. The bus was filled with the gas, creating chaos and panic, with no escape for those suffering the attack.

In view of all of these events and the current conditions of Tlalnepantla, where the majority of the population is now in exile, families have been separated, and many more people have been disappeared, international support is crucial.

Letters may be sent demanding the end of the violent repression against the people of Tlanepantla and the respect of the constitutional rights of the people.

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Original article is at
: http://www.indybay.org/news/2004/01/1668316.php

FEDS WIN RIGHT TO WAR PROTESTERS' RECORDS

BY RYAN J. FOLEY, AP

DES MOINES, Iowa - In what may be the first subpoena of its kind in decades, a federal judge has ordered a university to turn over records about a gathering of anti-war activists.

In addition to the subpoena of Drake University, subpoenas were served this past week on four of the activists who attended a Nov. 15 forum at the school, ordering them to appear before a grand jury Tuesday, the protesters said.

Federal prosecutors refuse to comment on the subpoenas.

In addition to records about who attended the forum, the subpoena orders the university to divulge all records relating to the local chapter of the National Lawyers Guild, a New York-based legal activist organization that sponsored the forum.

The group, once targeted for alleged ties to communism in the 1950s, announced Friday it will ask a federal court to quash the subpoena on Monday.

"The law is clear that the use of the grand jury to investigate protected political activities or to intimidate protesters exceeds its authority," guild President Michael Ayers said in a statement.

Representatives of the Lawyer's Guild and the American Civil Liberties Union said they had not heard of such a subpoena being served on any U.S. university in decades.

Those served subpoenas include the leader of the Catholic Peace Ministry, the former coordinator of the Iowa Peace Network, a member of the Catholic Worker House, and an anti-war activist who visited Iraq in 2002.

They say the subpoenas are intended to stifle dissent.

"This is exactly what people feared would happen," said Brian Terrell of the peace ministry, one of those subpoenaed. "The civil liberties of everyone in this country are in danger. How we handle that here in Iowa is very important on how things are going to happen in this country from now on."

The forum, titled "Stop the Occupation! Bring the Iowa Guard Home!" came the day before 12 protesters were arrested at an anti-war rally at Iowa National Guard headquarters in Johnston. Organizers say the forum included nonviolence training for people planning to demonstrate.

The targets of the subpoenas believe investigators are trying to link them to an incident that occurred during the rally. A Grinnell College librarian was charged with misdemeanor assault on a peace officer; she has pleaded innocent, saying she simply went limp and resisted arrest.

"The best approach is not to speculate and see what we learn on Tuesday" when the four testify, said Ben Stone, executive director of the Iowa Civil Liberties Union, which is representing one of the protesters.

Mark Smith, a lobbyist for the Washington-based American Association of University Professors, said he had not heard of any similar case of a U.S. university being subpoenaed for such records.

He said the case brings back fears of the "red squads" of the 1950s and campus clampdowns on Vietnam War protesters.

According to a copy obtained by The Associated Press, the Drake subpoena asks for records of the request for a meeting room, "all documents indicating the purpose and intended participants in the meeting, and all documents or recordings which would identify persons that actually attended the meeting."

It also asks for campus security records "reflecting any observations made of the Nov. 15, 2003, meeting, including any records of persons in charge or control of the meeting, and any records of attendees of the meeting."

Several officials of Drake, a private university with about 5,000 students, refused to comment Friday, including school spokeswoman Andrea McDonough. She referred questions to a lawyer representing the school, Steve Serck, who also would not comment.

A source with knowledge of the investigation said a judge had issued a gag order forbidding school officials from discussing the subpoena.

Drake University: http://www.drake.edu/
National Lawyers Guild: http://www.nlg.org/

OAKLAND'S SLAUGHTERHOUSE SPACE SHUT DOWN

February, 2004. Someone blocked in an Amtrak worker and she came to the door and asked if we knew whose van it was and if they could move it. In five minutes that van was moved and the woman drove away. But within those five minutes of waiting, she had flagged down a cop and told them she was blocked and that she saw a bunch of bloody, scary, drunk people coming out of that door, our door.

I saw the cops pull up. Sent everyone inside and thought the door got locked. Tried to lower the big rolling door, but it got stuck just as a cop was limboing under and it. He even hit his back a little. But he got in, and asked what was going on, I said I didn't know, that I had heard some music coming from the other side of the building but that I was just closing up and nothing was going on here. He asked if he could look around just to see, I said sure, queasily. So they walked down the hallway, nothing crazy, got closer to the end of the hallway and the doors weren't locked and they could tell where the music was coming from. Then I walked up to them and they said who is in charge, and I stepped up and said that I was, and they asked me to get everyone to leave so basically so they didn't have to. And, I am way cool with the opportunity to get my people out, rather than letting the cops do it. So, that's what happened.

Of course then they were relatively cool, saying that we know your probably doing a good thing keeping kids outta trouble, but that we have to do it by the book. And for me to contact the special events sergeant to find out what thing I would need to do to throw events like this, and I took down the number and knew that we were effectively shut down. The cops did seem to respect the way I controlled the room and that I knew every passed-out drunk person and hooked them up with their friends to take care of them and get them home. Even averting the ambulance call they made to bring Jess to the emergency room for alcohol poisoning. But the cops really didn't trip on the drinking and the kids, but for me, when you are gambling with your freedom, it's a good time to stop running shows at that location. Maybe one last hurrah. And definitely there are other warehouses to invade and destroy!!

Josh, the manager of the Slaughterhouse building, said he checked out a new building just the other day and is seriously considering moving operations there. Death x Excess is also acquiring a warehouse and is a possibility. We will keep rocking! It's just getting harder and harder to hide from the cops. But we are faster and stronger and goshdarnit, this is our way of life—they are just doing their jobs. We will always find a place, away from persecution, to dance and be free.

We had a great stint of shows at the Slaughterhouse 12. If we get one last bash in, that will be an even baker's dozen.
peace,
John the Baker

Rising Stakes In Haiti as Ex-Duvalier Thugs Take Over Opposition

by Jim Lobe, *OneWorld.net*

The emergence of former paramilitary and military leaders accused of atrocities committed during Haiti's last period of military rule at the head of spreading rebellion against President Jean-Bertrand Aristide has added urgency to international efforts to deal with the ongoing crisis in the Caribbean nation.

The uprising, which has cut off hundreds of towns and villages in the north and central parts of the country from desperately needed relief supplies, is also fueling fears of a major exodus of poor Haitians by boat and across the border into the Dominican Republic, which has taken steps to close its border.

U.S. relief agencies, including CARE and Catholic Relief Services (CRS), have launched an emergency supply effort for cities and towns taken over by rebels, and in areas where barricades have been erected by contending forces.

"The situation is critical," said Dula James, CRS' Country Representative for Haiti. "Staff have been in contact with communities and partners in the north and report that rural villages lack food, household items, clothing and materials for shelter—a result of ongoing violence and looting."

The uprising began Feb 5 when a gang—called the Cannibal Army when it was allied with Aristide and later renamed the Artibonite Resistance Front (ARF)--seized the police station in Gonaives, the country's fourth largest city, and subsequently burned and looted other government offices. Several days later, another anti-Aristide gang seized the nearby town of St. Marc, which has since been retaken by government forces.

Tension in Cap-Haitien, Haiti's second biggest city, has risen steadily since yet another rebel group—reportedly led by a former chief of the paramilitary Front for the Advancement and Progress of Haiti (FRAPH), Louis Jodel Chamblain—seized the Central Plateau town of Hinche after killing the police chief and two of his officers several days ago. A total of more than 50 people have been killed to date.

The emergence of Chamblain, who apparently slipped across the border from the Dominican Republic where he has lived in exile for almost a decade, and several other personalities associated with FRAPH, drew calls of alarm from human rights groups both in Haiti and other capitals. FRAPH, the descendant of the feared Ton-Ton Macoutes from the Duvalier dynasty, acted primarily as a death squad for the military after it ousted Aristide in 1990 until the former priest was returned to power by 2,000 U.S. troops in 1994.

Chamblain himself was convicted of involvement in the assassination of Antoine Izmery, a prominent pro-democracy activist, while he was attending a Catholic mass in 1993, after Aristide's return, but as FRAPH leader, he was also implicated in a number of murders that never went to trial. FRAPH was accused by international human rights groups of killing hundreds of suspected Aristide supporters and attacking entire neighborhoods of towns and cities where Aristide was considered particularly popular during the military's reign.

Reports from Hinche indicated that Chamblain is accompanied by Guy Philippe, Cap Haitien's police chief under military rule, and Jean Pierre Baptiste, alias "Jean Tatoune" who was sentenced to life imprisonment for his participation in a 1994 massacre that killed dozens of people in Raboteau. Chamblain is reportedly planning attacks on Cap-Haitien.

Chamblain's forces are said to be equipped with machine guns and other weapons that were apparently cached after Aristide's return. The beleaguered 5,000-man Haitian police force—Aristide abolished the Haitian army in 1995--is no match for such an arsenal, according to reports from Haiti.

"As rebel forces, under leadership of convicted perpetrators of human rights violations, expand their control in the center and north of the country, and the population of conflicted areas is cut off from supplies of food and medicines, fears of a mass population outflow from Haiti are bound to increase," Amnesty International said Wednesday.

U.S. officials have been planning to set up a detention camp at the U.S. naval base at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, to temporarily house Haitians intercepted on the high seas, as they did 12 years ago when the base became home to tens of thousands of desperate refugees as military repression reached its height, after the 1990 coup that forced Aristide into exile.

Human rights groups strongly protested the detentions at the time, insisting that Washington was violating international refugee law by denying the refugees the right to claim asylum.

The crisis—and the possibility of a major outflow of boat people desperate to reach U.S. shores—has forced the Bush administration to take a more active role in the diplomatic discussions about how to deal with the crisis than it had previously been willing to consider.

While some elements of the administration have made little secret of their desire to see Aristide, long seen by right-wing Republicans as a dangerously radical demagogue, ousted from power, Secretary of State Colin Powell, who worked with former President Jimmy Carter in organizing the Haitian president's restoration in 1994, made clear earlier this week that Washington would not support his ouster by rebel forces. "We cannot buy into a proposition that says the elected president must be forced out of office by thugs," he said Tuesday.

At the same time, Washington has stressed that it has no plans to intervene directly, although it has not excluded possible U.S. participation in a UN-sponsored police force that could defuse the situation.

The State Department is backing a set of proposals that emerged from a mediation effort by the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), that include the reform and depoliticization of the Haitian police force, the appointment of a prime minister acceptable to the civil opposition, new parliamentary elections, and the disarmament of pro-Aristide gangs.

Aristide agreed to implement these proposals late last month but the opposition has insisted that the president first agree to resign from office. For his part, Aristide has vowed to serve out his elected term, which ends in two years.

The UN Security Council approved a resolution Wednesday that called on both Aristide and the civil opposition to "restore confidence and dialogue, and overcome their differences peacefully and democratically through constitutional means." The Organization of American States (OAS) is expected to approve a similar resolution Thursday.

If the opposition and Aristide can reach a political settlement based on the CARICOM proposals, "we (and)...the international community (are) prepared to do what we can to help with additional police forces," Powell said in an interview Wednesday. "But right now, there are no plans for the outside world to come in and impose a police or military solution on this problem."

State Department spokesman Richard Boucher stressed Wednesday that Aristide had agreed to implement the CARICOM proposals, and that Washington expected him to do so, while also calling on the civil opposition to use its influence to "take steps to quell the violence and seek only a peaceful, negotiated, constitutional solution to Haiti's troubles."

ACTIVISTS BREAK THE LAW IN SUPPORT OF THE MORNING-AFTER PILL

by Jennifer Block, Village Voice

NEW YORK CITY—Five feminists committed a crime in broad daylight this afternoon before some 100 cheering accomplices at Rockefeller Plaza, and they blamed the Food and Drug Administration for making them do it. The offense? Giving a friend the emergency contraceptive known as the "morning-after pill," which is still only available by prescription. It remains off-limits without a doctor's note despite 20 years of scientific data showing it to be "safer than aspirin," according to activists.

"Women should not have to rely on luck to control their reproductive lives," declared Erin Mahoney, one of the chief conspirators of the post-Valentine's Day action and co-chair of the NOW-New York State (National Organization for Women) Reproductive Rights Task Force. Mahoney then raised a pill in her fist, demanded that the drug be available over-the-counter, and handed it (illegally) to the next speaker.

More than 400 other women around the country joined the conspiracy, said organizers, signing a pledge to "give a friend the morning-after pill on February 15—or any day they need it," and Dr. Linda W. Prine was on hand at the New York rally to aid and abet. She wrote out prescriptions—with twelve refills—to anyone who asked, including this reporter. "I also provide abortions," said the local family practitioner, "so I know what women go through when they have an unplanned pregnancy. I'm here because I want to prevent that in any way I can."

The "MAP Conspiracy" pledge was delivered last week to FDA commissioner Mark McClellan, who had been due to grant or deny over-the-counter status to "Plan B," manufactured by Barr Laboratories, by February 20 but announced on Friday that he was delaying the decision for 90 days. The pill, not to be confused with the home-abortion drug RU-486, is essentially a megadose of the same hormones contained in ordinary birth-control pills, but is much safer, with nausea as the only common side effect. It's stocked on drugstore shelves in 38 countries, including Canada.

HI-TECH VOTING MACHINES 'THREATEN' US POLLS

Scientist Warns That Electronic Votes Cannot Be Safeguarded

by Tim Radford and Dan Glaister, Guardian/UK

US voters will go to the polls in November using electronic voting machines which cannot be verified, a computer scientist warned yesterday.

David Dill, of Stanford University, told the American Association for the Advancement of Science meeting in Seattle, that 1,600 technologists and 53 elected officials had joined his crusade for a "paper trail" so that electronic voting machines could be checked.

In an election for a seat in the Florida house of representatives last month, touch-screen machines recorded 127 blank ballots. The race was won by 12 votes. No recount was possible because there was nothing to recount.

In an election in Indiana last year, an electronic system recorded more than 144,000 votes in an election with fewer than 19,000 registered voters.

The system is set for its first significant test in just over two weeks when several states will use the machines for both the Democratic primaries and for several local votes held on the same day. These states include Georgia, Ohio, California and Maryland. San Diego in California has bought more than 10,000 machines, while the state of Maryland has spent $55m on 16,000 machines for its voters.

"The system is in crisis," Professor Dill said. "A quarter of the American public are voting on machines where there's very little protection of their votes. I don't think there's any reason to trust these machines."

There have also been criticisms of the company which won the contract to supply the machines, Diebold Inc. It has been accused of secrecy, arrogance and political bias. Diebold's chief executive, Walden O'Dell, held a political fundraiser for President Bush last year.

"If the machine silently loses or changes the vote, the voter has no clue what has happened," said Prof Dill. "If you have computers recording votes or counting votes, then you have to do manual recounts with sufficient frequency that machine errors are likely to be caught."

A bill has been introduced requiring that digital voting machines leave a paper trail and that their software be available for public inspection.

A test of the machines in Maryland found the machines to be vulnerable. A computer security firm found it easy to cast multiple votes and override the machines' vote-recording mechanisms.

CASE SET TO BE DROPPED AGAINST GCHQ MOLE WHO BLEW WHISTLE ON US BUGGING

by Richard Norton-Taylor, Guardian/UK (excerpted)

The prosecution is preparing to abandon the case against a former GCHQ employee charged with leaking information about a "dirty tricks" spying operation before the invasion of Iraq, the Guardian has learned.

Katharine Gun, 29, is due to appear at the Old Bailey next week where she has said she will plead not guilty to breaking the Official Secrets Act.

She has said her alleged disclosures exposed serious wrongdoing by the US and could have helped to prevent the deaths of Iraqis and British forces in an "illegal war".

The case is potentially hugely embarrassing for the government and would open up GCHQ operations to unwelcome publicity. Also damaging and politically threatening is her plan to seek the disclosure of the full advice from the attorney general, Lord Goldsmith, on the legality of the war against Iraq.

The government would almost certainly refuse to disclose such advice, arguing that opinions of its law officers are traditionally protected from the outside world. Ms Gun's lawyers were likely to argue she could not get a fair trial without seeing the attorney's advice on the war and the disclosure of GCHQ's activities.

Ms Gun, a translator at GCHQ, was arrested in March but not charged until eight months later.

The long delay suggests that even then there was a fierce debate in government and GCHQ circles about the advisability of a secrets trial against an employee who said she acted out of conscience over an issue which divided the country.

Ms Gun was arrested when it was reported that America's national security agency, GCHQ's US partner, was conducting a secret surveillance operation, bugging UN delegates' home and office telephones and emails.

The NSA told GCHQ that the particular targets of an eavesdropping "surge" were the delegates from Angola, Cameroon, Chile, Bulgaria, Guinea and Pakistan - the six crucial "swing votes" on the security council. A memo sent by Frank Koza, a senior NSA official, said the information from the eavesdropping would be used against the key UN delegations.

In a statement when she was charged, Ms Gun said: "Any disclosures that may have been made were justified because they exposed serious illegality and wrongdoing on the part of the US government which attempted to subvert our own security services. Secondly, they could have helped prevent widescale death and casualties amongst ordinary Iraqi people and UK forces in the course of an illegal war."

VENEZUELA'S CHAVEZ SAYS U.S. SEEKING HIS OVERTHROW

by Pascal Fletcher, excerpted from Reuters

Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez accused the United States on Sunday of plotting his overthrow through a coup or assassination should his opponents fail to secure a referendum vote against him this year.

Speaking on the eve of a regional summit in Mexico, the left-wing leader, for the second day running, delivered a furious tirade against senior U.S officials who have criticized his five-year presidency.

Venezuela is a major supplier of oil to the United States.

The Venezuelan president said recent statements by U.S. officials urging him to submit to a constitutional referendum were "preparing the ground" for his possible violent ouster, either through a military coup or an assassin's bullet.

He repeated his conviction that Venezuela's opposition had failed to gather enough pro-vote signatures to trigger a referendum in April or May. Electoral authorities are due to start checking the signatures next week to see if they fulfill the 2.4 million required.

"If in the end they don't have enough signatures, and the National Electoral Council declares this, then I can see them there in Washington saying I'm an enemy of democracy," Chavez said during his "Hello President" television and radio show.

"(They'll say) that Chavez sabotaged the referendum, and so we have to get rid of him, it's worth toppling him ... that the armed forces should take up arms against me, or that someone should shoot me," he added.

The opposition says it collected over 3 million signatures and has accused the president of trying to block the poll.

Chavez, who has clashed with Washington in the past, accused critics like Bush's National Security Adviser Condoleezza Rice of having publicly supported a 2002 coup that briefly overthrew him. Washington denies this.

The Venezuelan leader promised to make his voice heard at Monday's Summit of the Americas in Monterrey, Mexico, which will be attended by President Bushand other regional leaders.

His weekend outbursts could herald a stormy meeting. The left-leaning governments of Argentina and Brazil also differ with Washington on foreign policy and free trade.

On Saturday, rebuffing condemnation from Rice of his friendship with Cuba's Communist President Fidel Castro, Chavez told the U.S. government to stop "sticking its nose" in Venezuela's affairs.

He attacked Rice again Sunday. "Am I not right to call her a meddling illiterate?" Chavez asked.

He again rejected U.S. accusations that he and Castro were working together to overthrow Latin American governments through popular revolts, like the one in Bolivia in October that toppled pro-U.S. President Gonzalo Sanchez de Lozada.

"What's the cause of the fall of Sanchez de Lozada in Bolivia? Is it Chavez? Is it Fidel (Castro)? No ... the cause comes from Washington, which designed the new international economic order," Chavez said. He, like Castro, argues that U.S. free-market capitalism causes poverty and inequality.

OF MICE AND MONEY MEN

The Sinister Grip that Disney Exerts on Children's Imaginations may Finally Loosen

by George Monbiot, *Guardian/UK*

If Comcast's takeover of the Disney Corporation goes ahead, the world's biggest media conglomeration will be built around one of humankind's most ancient practices. Investing animals with human characteristics is something we've been doing since we first applied charcoal to the walls of a cave. Ten thousand years later, as the $500m we have just spent watching Finding Nemo suggests, we still see ourselves as animals and animals as ourselves.

This suggests two things to me. The first is that, however much we assert our independence from nature, our consciousness remains in its thrall. Our minds were shaped when nothing was more real to us than the fear of being eaten and the fear of not eating. Peter Jackson, in his Lord of the Rings trilogy, deliberately exploits this primordial memory, by exposing us to giant hyenas and mastodons: two of the paleolithic animals with which our minds evolved. Steven Spielberg's tyrannosaurs and velociraptors, though they appeared more real, were less compelling. Could this be because, pre-dating rather than predating us, they played no role in the development of our evolutionary consciousness?

The second is that, though our engagement with the world is supposed to have been governed by a detachment from the objects of our curiosity ever since the Enlightenment, our tendency to project our minds into animals, plants and inanimate objects is undiminished. Anthropomorphism is an irredeemable human characteristic, and let he who has never sworn at his computer be the first to deny it.

But while there is something very old about Disney, there is, or was, something very new about it too. It welded commercial, cultural and political power in a way the world had never seen. I remember being struck in the 1980s by the conjunction of two images. One was a photograph of the May day parades in Moscow, with rockets looming over the heads of the marching soldiers. The other, taken six weeks earlier, was a photograph of a St Patrick's day parade in New York, in which giant Goofys and Donald Ducks were suspended above the marchers. The Soviet display was a conscious attempt to project power, the New York parade merely a celebration of the symbols of nationhood. But the St Patrick's day iconography seemed to me almost as sinister as the May day maneuvers, and for a while I couldn't understand why.

Was it simply that age-old prejudice against the upstart nation that had helped to shove Britain back in its box? It is hard for British people, even those who contest imperialism, to rid themselves of the resentments of a toppled empire. But I think I had got over it by then. Was it because Disney characters symbolized the crass and trivial aspects of American culture? Which other country, after all, constructs its national image around cartoon animals?

Well, just about all of them. Britain's lion and unicorn are, if anything, more ridiculous than Disney's caricatures, for the simple reason that they demand to be taken seriously. There is nothing as risible as those innumerable servile states whose eagles or lions or dragons proclaim the status of top predator. But in the ubiquity of the Disney characters we encounter just the opposite: hegemony represented by an infantilized mouse and an infantilized duck. Far from seeing this as ridiculous, I find it deeply frightening.

It's not just because of what I have read about Walt Disney and the corporation he founded. Today we know that the world's favorite uncle was a wife-beating, child-grooming, union-busting employer of Nazi war criminals, who denounced Hollywood dissidents to the House Un American affairs committee and made mendacious propaganda films such as Our Friend the Atom. The corporation has repeatedly been exposed for contracting its toy- and clothes-making work to atrocious sweatshops. In 1996, the year in which Disney's chief executive, Michael Eisner, made $565m, the workers stitching Disney's branded clothes in Haiti were earning as little as a dollar a day. In China today, according to a new report by the US national labor committee, a factory producing Disney toys enforces 130-hour weeks, with a day off every two months. But my fear of the dominance of Disney's magic kingdom is about more than this.

One of the paradoxes of our times is that, as western societies age, their culture is infantilized Just as the number of elderly people in America and Europe begins to tip the scales against the young, youth culture is exalted as never before. And the youths we celebrate are getting younger. There's a simple reason for this. It is easier to get inexperienced people to part with their money (or to persuade their parents to part with their money) than it is to deceive the elderly. Money chases youth, and culture chases the money. Advertisers determine the content of television shows and newspaper features, which in turn shape our cultural consciousness.

As Eric Schlosser has shown, it was Walt Disney who "perfected the art of selling things to children". He developed a vertically integrated business in which his TV programs sold his films, and his films sold his theme parks and toys. He was able to drum up fealties among children that no other corporation had been able to summon. The Mickey Mouse Club he established in 1930 helped to pioneer a new form of brand loyalty, and to extract the names, addresses and preferences of its members. Only one company - McDonald's - has captured children as effectively as Disney, and for the past eight years McDonald's and Disney have enjoyed an exclusive global marketing agreement. In both cases, a hard hegemonic will is exercised through the commercialization of "happiness" and "fun". Disney's creation and domination of the youth market represents the definitive triumph of the empire of commerce.

So perhaps we should not be surprised to see, in that St Patrick's day parade and in so many other events over the past 60 years or more, people marching behind the mouse and the duck. It may be an unconscious display of power, but it is a display of power none the less. "Hollywood conquered the world," the American critic Michael Medved told the Daily Telegraph last year, "long before America had conquered it economically or militarily ... Its films were our advance legions." In the 40s, the Motion Picture Export Association used to call itself "the little state department". One Hollywood producer described "the meshing of Donald Duck and diplomacy" as "a Marshall Plan for ideas". The United States, he announced, needed Hollywood more than it needed the H-bomb.

Walt Disney's characters are sinister because they encourage us, like those marchers, to promote the hegemony of the corporations even when we have no intention of doing so. He captured a deep stream of human consciousness, branded it and, when we were too young to understand the implications, sold it back to us. Comcast's hostile takeover bid suggests that the power of his company to seize our imaginations is declining. A giant media corporation may be about to become even bigger, but if the attack means that Disney is losing its ability to shape the minds of the world's children, this is something we should celebrate.

We are always looking for quality news items on a local, national and international scale.
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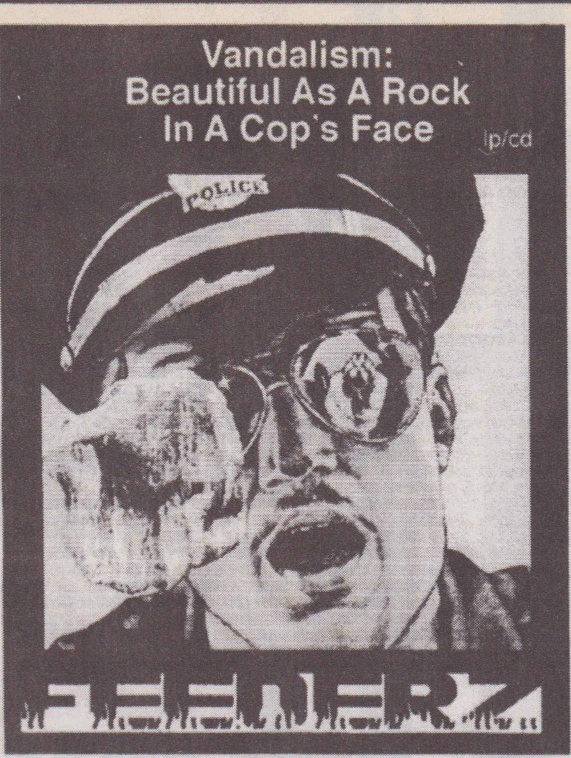

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ATOXXXICO "HARDCORE CHILANGO" CD
These guys were part of mexican late 80's DIY scene along with Solucion Mortal, Masacre 68, SS-20, Sedicion, Xenofobia... This discography CD includes the 'Punks de Mierda' EP (from 1987, the first mexican punk vinyl ever released), 'Tu Tienes la Razon' LP ('90) & 'TV' demotape ('88) tracks + lyrics, translations...Never printed outside Mexico, this is definitely essential stuff for enthusiasts interested on latin punk. OUT ON EARLY MARCH!!!

COMING SOON ON LATE MARCH...

HERESY "DISCOGRAPHY PART I - 1985-87" CD
Fall in the trip to the early days of this 80's UK thrash hardcore combo. All tracks from 'Never Healed' EP, 'Thanks' EP & also their 1st studio session from 1985 (w/ 7 UNRELEASED songs!) plus another session from 1987 with 2 more unreleased tracks. This reissue will also have great history text, lots of never seen pictures, lyrics, translations and remastering work done by Kalv and Baz. Another 100% official work between Speedstate and band members. You can't definitely miss this out!!!

RAPT "COMPLETE DISCOGRAPHY" CD
Who reminds nowadays about this damn cool frenchcore legend, the mighty RAPT? After endless bootlegs in the last years, these guys will be properly reissued. Here you will have all their studio sessions, spreaded around the 80's good tape trading days, and also some unreleased songs too. Mandatory stuff if you like european hardcore punk circa 84-85.

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plan it X records

hello, welcome To This plan-it-X ad. I'm sorry that its. so small but we have alot to cram into this tiny space and we can't afford a bigger ad, Thankfully MRR is one of the few punk zines to keep their ad cost down, that's why they are the Best. any way, plan-it-x is a DIY label that is all about being cheap (see below) and putting out great music that our friends make. We are turning 10 years old this summer and we are having a Big party you are invited. (Details coming soon).

on with the ad:

Soophie Nun Squad "pazzile slizzle tha drizzle" or something. the new full length by these crazy party punks. prepare to dance. CD

Sissies "everything in the world" a discography both full lengths and much more on one CD with a Big Booklet. girl vocals-pop punk! —

ghost mice "?" i haven't thought of a name yet, But this is ournew full length. ghost mice is me and hannah (of T.DIE. + OP:CC) playing folk music on guitar + violin. on tour in MAY + July — CD

more CDS: this bike is a pipe bomb "Dance party" or "front seat solidarity" aBe froman "s/t" or the split with Soophie. against me "crime as forgiven by..." madeline "kissing + dancing" Carrie Nations "Be still" one reason "Rivers..." Bananas "1st 10 years" or "slippery subject" or "Nautical R N' R" Blank fight "house Band Feud" shotwell "the devil has its day. i think that's all!

all CDS cost only 5.00 post. paid.

hey thanks so much for reading and for buying CDS from me for 10 years. really. thanks. questions: chrisclavin@yahoo.com

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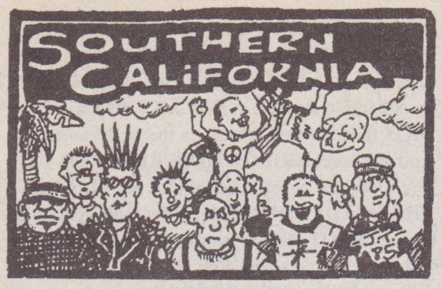


Southern California Scene Report
By Renae Bryant

The first writing I ever did for *MRR* was a scene report back in 1995. Slowly I started contributing interviews. Then Tim convinced me I should write a monthly column. It seems only fitting that almost ten years later I finally do another scene report. This time, instead of covering what is known as the "Inland Empire," I am actually going to sock the whole Southern California Scene (minus San Diego, because I do not feel that I know enough about that scene and the bands involved) to you. When I'm touring I realize how lucky I am to live in an area where I can go to an awesome show any night of the week. As a result of this fact, this scene report will serve as a resource. It will be short on ornate descriptions but full of useful information about venues, press, bands, radio shows, and record stores. I will include phone numbers and some internet addresses. It is up to you to do internet searches to learn more about the information presented, especially the bands. It is quite probable that I will inadvertently leave someone or something important to the Southern California scene out. For that, I apologize ahead of time. This is quite a task because the IE, LA, and OC scenes could easily have their own reports specific to their areas. If you are from any of these areas I encourage you to do your own scene report.

MEET THE VIRUS

The Inland Empire: This area includes Corona, Norco, Riverside, San Bernardino, Redlands, Fontana, Moreno Valley, Lake Elsinore and Hemet.

Venues: THE SHOWCASE THEATRE (909) 340-0988, **SHOOTERS SKATE PARK/VENUE** (909) 766-6789, **DE CAFÉ** (909) 295-9029, **C&C BOOKING** 18+ shows (909) 640-5280, **JOHNNY'S** 21+ (909) 227-6602, rspevents@yahoo.com, **ANGEL'S SPORTS BAR** 21+ (909) 371-9738, and **UC RIVERSIDE CAMPUS EVENTS** (909) 787-1012 (ask them to connect you to campus events).

Press: **www.ontherag.net, www.digressonline.com, www.submerge411.com,** ***X 'EM UP*** (www.dorecords.com), ***Skinnie Magazine, Press Enterprise*** (daily) and ***Sun Newspaper*** (daily).

Bands: (mine first) **ALL OR NOTHING HC, NARCOLEPTIC YOUTH, TERMINAL HOLOCAUST, ORDER OF THE FLY, ATOMIC BOMBS, LAST CALL, STEM CELL RESEARCH, LELAND'S CACTUS RANCH, THE BELL RAYS, HOBO JAZZ, CLONE HERO, PIANO DRAG, DOGS OF IRE, CIRCUIT SCARECROW, SLAVE TO FREEDOM, LEONARD, VOODOO GLOW SKULLS, THE PHUZZ, JOHNNY CHEAPO, CONSPIRACY OF THOUGHT, BEAUTIFUL MISTAKE, MANNTIS, BLUE BLOODS, RED SOUND, OBLIGED, NO DECENCY, SINAI BEACH,** etc.

Radio: **www.kucr.org, thevynilhours@yahoo.com**

Record stores: **SOUNDS LIKE...** (909) 343-9333, **DR. STRANGE RECORDS** (909) 944-1778 www.drstrange.com, **MAD PLATTER** (909) 328-1600, and **CD WORLD** in Riverside.

CIRIL

AT HOME BOMB

Los Angeles: This area includes Pomona, Claremont, Hollywood, South Gate, East LA, San Gabriel Valley, Pasadena, Downtown, Los Feliz, Echo Park, the LA Beaches, etc.

Venues: THE GLASSHOUSE (909) 629-0377, **51 BUCKINGHAM** (909) 629-0051, **THE PRESS** (909) 625-4808, **THE ALLEN THEATRE** (323) 249-9775, **COBALT CAFÉ** (818) 348-3789, **FAIS DO DO** (323) 954-8080, **CIA CLUB** (818) 506-6353, **HENRY FONDA THEATRE** (323) 464-0808, **MR. T'S BOWL** 21+ (323) 256-7561, **SACRED GROUNDS** (310) 514-0800, **TOP FUEL** (323) 876-7213, **TRASH CITY RECORDS** (323) 268-6102, **TROUBADOUR** (310) 276-6168, and **SPITFIRE PRODUCTIONS** (I left out what I consider to be the "pay to play" venues on the Sunset strip.)

BELLRAYS

Press: ***It's All Gravy*** zine (gravyzine@hotmail.com or 312 W. 8th St. Los Angeles, CA 90014), **www.destroyall.net, ww.razorcake.com, www.highwiredaze.com** (metal), **www.citizinemag.com, www.meanstreet.com, www.laweekly.com,** and **www.latimes.com.**

Bands: THE VOIDS, F-MINUS, 46 SHORT, ALL OUT ATTACK, BAD SAMARITANS, THE SKULLS, WHITE TRASH DEBUTANTES, ILL REPUTE, TEXAS TERRI AND THE STIFF ONES, UNION 13, WESTERN WASTE, MEET THE VIRUS, NAKED AGGRESSION, CIRIL, THE WEIRDOS, MY RUIN, THE START, LA BESTIA, STAY AT HOME BOMB, SUGARPUSS, THE HITCH HIKERS, TERROR, BLUE COLLAR SPECIAL, ANGEL CITY OUTCASTS, CLIT 45, THE FIXTURES, ARMISTICE, DESTRUCTION MADE SIMPLE, THE GOD AWEFULS, TOYS THAT KILL, THE HUNNS, 400 BLOWS, LEOPOLD, GO BETTY GO, etc.

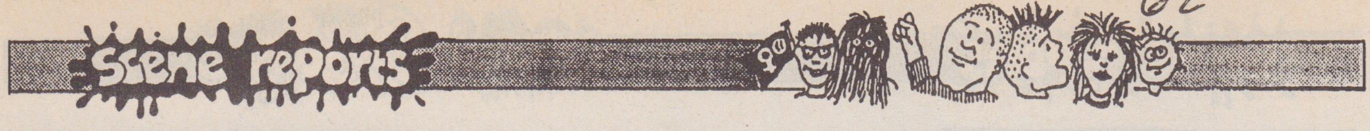
Record Stores: HEADLINE RECORDS (323) 655-2125, **TRASH CITY RECORDS, AMOEBA** (323) 245-6400 [they do in-stores also], **ARON'S RECORDS** (323) 469-4700, **BENWAY** (310) 396-8898, **RHINO** (909) 626-7774.

Radio: KXLU 88.9 (310) 338-5958, www.kscradio.com, **KPFK** (818) 985-2711, **KSPC** 88.7 (909) 984-3838.

Orange County: This area includes Costa Mesa, the city of Orange, Yorba Linda, Irvine, OC Beaches, etc.

Venues: CHAIN REACTION (www.allages.com), **HOUSE OF BLUES** (714) 778-BLUE, **THE GROVE OF ANAHEIM** (714) 712-2700, **GALAXY THEATRE** (www.galaxytheatre.com), **THE ANARCHY LIBRARY** (562) 434-8292, **DI PIAZZA RESTAURANT AND LOUNGE** (562) 498-2461, **DOLL HUT** (714) 533-1286, **HARD ROCK CAFÉ** (949) 640-8844, **ALEX'S BAR** (562) 434-8292, and **FITZGERALD'S SPORTS PUB** (714) 968-4523.

Press: www.ocweekly.com and **www.skratch-magazine.com.**



Radio: KUCI 88.9 (714) 979-5044.
Record Stores: RADIATION RECORDS (714) 400-0019, **GREENE RECORDS** (714) 505-6626, **BIONIC** (714) 562-1912 [Fullerton], **BIONIC** (714) 828-4225 [Cypress], **BIONIC** (714) 846-2585 [Huntington Beach].
Bands: AMERIKAN MADE, THE SCARRED, NEON MANIACS, TSOL, IGNITE, etc.

OK, once again, I know this was short on band updates and scene gossip. I just wanted to put something together that could be useful for anyone wanting to visit and/or touring bands. I am going to post this on my website as well so if I left out your band, radio show, zine, record store, or venue please send an email to webmistress@ontherag.net and I will add your information. If you need specific information on non-profit organizations or activists, feel free email me with your requests. There is some amazing work being done here in Southern California, contrary to popular belief.

Yes! Finally the other day it got above 40 degrees in Boston! Whoopie! By the time you read this we may be well on our way to a full-fledged springtime! The winter just seems so short this year. I guess it's because I've been keeping busy trying to keep up with the killer Boston scene!

Lots of bands have been putting out new releases to kick off 2004! **CUT THE SHIT** put out an awesome one-sided 7"...finally. It rips! These guys will be touring somewhere near you this summer, don't be a retard...GO! Close friends **RNR**'s new LP (on Deadalive Records) is out and I must say it's 100% rock 'n' roll hardcore. These guys apparently will be going to the Pacific side this summer to kick out the jams Boston-style for all the kids on the West Coast. Punk rock suburbanites **THE CONTRARY** just had their debut CD released by **WELFARE RECORDS,** the owner of which also owns the only punk record store in the city, now that we've lost our beloved **MARS RECORDS**...you will be missed. **WELFARE RECORDS** also released my buddies **THE KNOX**'s debut CD, a vinyl version of **TOMMY AND THE TERRORS**'s *13 The Hard Way* album (these guys also have a track on the newest Punch Drunk comp put out by TKO Records). Tommy and The Terrors seem to be reaping some benefits from their constant touring and playing over the past bunch of years. Way to go, guys! Their Yingvie Malmstein-esque guitar player Mike has also started a site called **TAINTED ANGELS**, which boasts itself as "Punk Rock Girls In Various States of Undress"...awesome, check it out. *(Awesome? Am not really certain that another "punk porn" site ala Suicide Girls really qualifies as "awesome." I'm as super pro-sex as the next person, but this feels like more perpetuation on rather mainstream sexist shit, than anything that I would like to normally associate with punk. Mike Thorn)* **RODENT POPSICLE** is busy at work putting out a slew of new records by bands like ALL FOR NOTHING (CA), SPITFIRES UNITED (VA) and CAPO REGIME (UK).

It seems that **TOXIC NARCOTIC** (who will be coming out with a new 12" picture disk soon) will be taking a break from touring for a bunch of months to record some new material. They have released a new CD single, *Shoot People Not Dope* on their own R.P. label. **THE PROFITS** are also due to have their new single, *USAtrocities,* out sometime soon. The **xFILESx** have released a brand new LP...I haven't heard it yet but if it's anything like their last 7", it will be one for the ages. **SAY GOODBYE**, a local favorite, has released their new 12"....just awesome. It was put out by CA's **WESTERN FRONT RECORDS**, who have taken a huge interest in Boston area hardcore as of late. **LOCKIN OUT RECORDS** has released the *Sweet Visions* 7" comp with tracks from Righteous Jams (who will be going into the studio to record soon), **SOS, SAY NO MORE, GET REAL, THE WRONG SIDE, MENTAL,** and **THE JAGUARZ. xDRUG TESTx**, our New Hampshire compatriot, is also releasing a 7", so are **POLICE BEAT** and **YOUTH ATTACK.** New Hampshire's **ROCKET PUNCH RECORDS** has released a post-break up 7" by the now defunct **A-TEAM.** The 7", which features CHEAP TRICK covers, is a split with RNR. This is great, you should buy this. **FOR THE WORSE,** one of the best hardcore?punk? bands in Boston (this is my opinion...fuck off!) just spent three days recording with Richard Marr (TN, Tommy and The Terrors, and almost every great band in Boston) at **GALAXY PARK STUDIOS** for their new release on the well-known hardcore label **BRIDGE NINE RECORDS.** I'm sure it will be sweet. Richard also just recorded **THE DEAD PEDESTRIANS** for their upcoming release. **SHOT DEAD** have called it quits. They had just released a single on the burgeoning, relocalized **MOO COW RECORDS.**

This month marked the passing of MARS RECORDS on Newbury Street. Tim, Andre, and the rest of the staff have been huge supporters of the Boston punk scene (and yours truly) for the past number of years. You will be missed! Of course when one door shuts another door opens. **MISSION RECORDS** in Rockland is open and carries all things hardcore. They also host bands on occasion.

There has been no change in venues here, except that the constant all ages with bar venue, **THE ALL ASIA CAFE,** has declared a "NO SLAMDANCING" rule. If I know punk kids, this venue will be unusable in a matter of months. We have come across a place in South Boston. **THE POLISH AMERICAN CLUB** and it will be hosting show starting this summer. **THE CENTRAL SQ. ELKS** is still the best place for shows and has been drawing upwards of 200 people for some shows...wow.

In May I will be putting on a three-day festival. **THE BOSTON IN-FEST 2004**! This is too big to not share with all of you fine people. For the past two weeks I have been contacting bands non-stop. This is an awesome local festival. It will feature only local (MA, NH, RI) punk/hard-

core bands. The bands that (at this moment) are confirmed are: **SWAT, THE PROFITS, RED INVASION, TOMMY AND THE TERRORS, THUMBS UP!, THESE LIES, TOXIC NARCOTIC, THE STRUGGLE** (whose 7" we just put out), **KERMIT'S FINGER, THE DOOCHE BAGS** (reunion), **THE RIOT, XFILESX, RIGHTEOUS JAMS, THE HAMMER BROs,** (whose demo seriously rips!), **DRUG TEST, FOR THE WORSE, CONCRETE FACELESS, 20-TO-1, THE REFUSENIKS, DISASTER STRIKES, MIA, SAY GOODBYE, HYMEN MANEUVER, DEFCON 4, TOXIC NARCOTIC, ZIPPO RAID, THE KNOX, CONFRONT, JHC, THE PROWL, CZOLGOLSZ, DIAL M FOR MURDER, THE EPIDEMIC, THE CONTRARY, MOURNINGSIDE, CHANTICLEER, THE CHUBS** (x-Gang Green), **THE JONEE EARTHQUAKE BAND, CHEECH, MARTIAL LAW, MISSIONSHIFTER, THE NUMBSKULLS, HAVExHEART**....and so many more. Check out our website for additions—we have been adding bands every day. We have all sorts of goodies in the works. A vegan lunch, a special record compilation (thanks to Welfare Records) and a lot more. Up here in Boston the summer is our favorite time of year. All of the bands and kids squeeze a whole years worth of touring/records /shows into about six months, while the weather is warm. I'm really psyched to see what kind of summer we have this year. I know that my summer is already booked full with doing zines, going on tour with THE STRUGGLE (look for us!), and putting out records. I'm sure that everyone else around here is in the same boat...until May...see ya! PAT FNS, PO Box 1299, Boston, MA 02130 www.FNSBoston.net fns_publishing@msn.com

If any of you have read the news section about the eviction of show and living spaces in Providence, RI…then you might think the Providence scene doesn't have much of a future. Well, you're wrong. Despite all the DIY spaces being shut down, and two bigger clubs being shut down two months ago, we still have a lot going for us. There are still a few show spaces, a lot of good bands, and all the promoters we need. We are just going to hear more of dreaded, "Oh, that date is already booked." In town labels are doing well, and people, as well as radio shows focusing on Providence music, show them a lot of support. The silk-screening artists keep bringing us amazing show posters, which are highly sought after and collectable. There aren't many fanzines, but the ones we have are very consistent and well done. I'm warning you, this report is not going to be only about the punk/hardcore scene—Providence has so much more than that.

Most of the remaining show spaces are legit bars and clubs:

AS220 is situated in downtown Providence. It's a non-profit organization that provides a performance space, galleries, residential spaces, and work studios. The place is open to everybody who wishes to play or exhibit their art. They have a café and a bar with very good beer, natural sodas, and yummy sandwiches. Grind, noise, metal, punk, indie, garage, rock, hip-hop, locals, jazz…all kind of bands play there. www.as2220.org

THE SAFARI LOUNGE is also located downtown—it's a small and smoky bar with a small stage and a PA. They do shows on the weekends, but unfortunately bands don't get paid, so it's only good for locals such as Arab On Radar, The Flying Luttenbachers, Vincebus Eruptum, Nefarious, Football Rabbit. A special mention to a mighty Lightning Bolt set one summer when they ended up playing outside on the street because it was too hot inside! That was insane! www.go.to/safariri

THE GREEN ROOM is in the Jewelry District of Providence. It's mainly a pool bar, but they have a side room where they book shows, have a good bar, and always have snacks around (vegetarian and non-vegetarian). MDC, Dropdead, Insurrection's first show, Nashville Pussy, and some more played there.www.snookers-greenroom.com/GreenRoomMain.asp

THE LIVING ROOM is on the West Side of Providence. It's a decent sized club, but unfortunately it's not being taking care of, so the place looks like a dump. It is owned by the same guy who owned the once-famous, original Living Room (where Black Flag played back in the day), but since they changed locations the place has gone somewhat downhill. Inepsy, Dropdead, High On Fire, Icons Of Filth (next week) have all played there. And it has also hosted events like the annual Thrash Bash, the Dropdead 10th anniversary show (Nine Shocks Terror…), and the Providence Declares War show (a large festival type show which drew over 600 people). We mainly use this venue for bigger bands/shows.

THE CALL and **THE CENTURY LOUNGE,** also located in the Jewelry District, are mostly blues, jazz, hip hop and reggae-oriented, but they have been known to have a hardcore show here and there. You just need to find the right hookup. www.thecallnightclub.com-

THE RUSSELL LAB is on the East Side on the Brown University campus. Only Brown students are allowed to book shows there. Vitamin X played there on their first US tour, and Black Dice are playing there on Feb 12. The Russell Lab is below another space called the **PRODUCTION WORKSHOP,** which used to have shows regularly in 1995-1996.

A few shows have happened at **VFW halls**, like the DS 13 show on September 11 which was a very big show, a very good one…and a super weird one as well.

The next three places are located in Olneyville, which is the area of Providence where Fort Thunder was located and also the area where a group of warehouse spaces were shut down. All of these spaces are not so much clubs but they are independently owned, legit with the city, and DIY oriented.

THE DIRT PALACE is a building run by women; they book occasional shows, puppet shows, comedy nights, movie nights, and fundraisers. They also host Spanish classes, a silk screening studio, and a practice room. **THE HIVE ARCHIVE** is a women-run feminist arts organization. They provide a feminist library and resource center, affordable community art studios and a gallery/performance space. **MONAHASSETT MILLS** is next to the defunct Forth Thunder, they do occasional shows (Most notably the Tin Can Full of Dreams Festival, an annual Breast Cancer fundraiser), and they also have a gallery and art studios.

As you can see, we have a few places to book shows and are lucky enough that there are a lot of dedicated people in town who are willing to work hard to bring us good bands.

ARMAGEDDON SHOP and **FIGHT MENTAL ARMAGEDDON** shows are booked by Ben (from Dropdead) and me. ARMAGEDDON SHOP did a few bigger metal shows (Impaled, Exhumed, Pungent Stench, Enslaved, Nunslaughter, Sublime Cadaveric Decomposition, [illegible]

TAL ARMAGEDDON series focuses primarily on punk/hardcore touring bands such as Kylesa, D.S.B., His Hero Is Gone, MDC, Selfish, Hellhound, Damage Deposit, and La Fraction. Armageddon Shop also contributed the Providence Declares War in September, which drew about 600 people. About 20 bands played all day in two different venues. armageddondaynow@hotmail.com.

TRASH ART! has been known for booking the famous Halloween Thrash Bash (Dropdead, Orchid, Anal Cunt, Black Dice, Arab On Radar, As The Sun Sets…), but also national tours (High On Fire, 16, Phobia, Mastodon, Converge, Noothgrush…) Trash Art! Is also a record label, but more info on that is in the record label section of the report. www.soundandculture.com

B SHARP Music store is located on Broadway, two blocks down the street from Armageddon Shop. They book one night a month at AS220 mostly indie rock and local shows.

FORCE OF NATURE and **HOSPITAL PRODUCTIONS** work together to bring us some of the more intense noise/industrial shows (Skin Crime, Taint, Emil Beaulieau, Sickness, Pleasurhorse, Prurient.)

There are a few people who book shows by themselves.

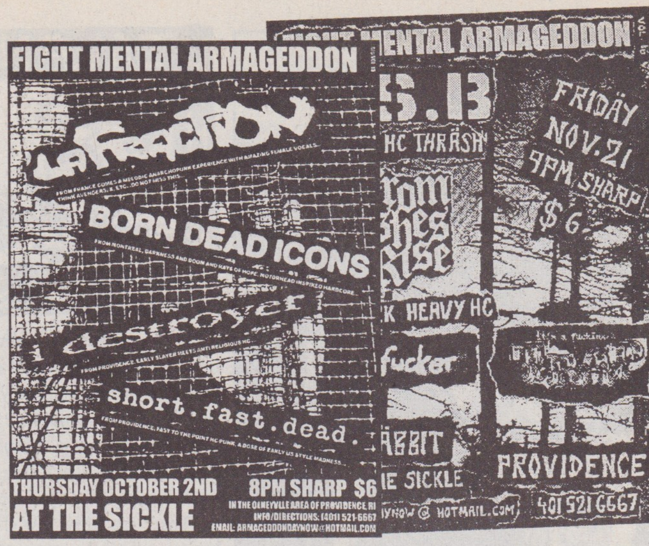
Jess Threat did a few collaborations with Fight Mental Armageddon (DS13, The Oath, Born Dead Icons, ETA, Voorhees, BornDeadIcons, and Vitamin X.) She also booked many shows at the Sickle before she moved in such as, RAMBO, Tear It Up, Municipal Waste, and the Rites. jessthreat@hotmail.com

Bob from Dropdead did a few shows as well, bringing us the mighty Inepsy, State Control; he also started the Providence Declares War series: Dropdead, Straight To Hell, Vincebus Eruptum, and Sawzall in NYC, and in Montreal and Quebec with I, Destroyer, Suffering Bastard, Vincebus Eruptum, Fourhorse, and The Nightmare Continues. Back in the day he brought us Disrupt, Grief, State Of Fear, and MDC…

Brian from Dropdead organized the Dropdead anniversary show, which was a very big deal, with tons of bands (Nine Shocks Terror, Limpwrist, Lightning Bolt, Kill The Man Who Questions, Arab On Radar, As The Sun Sets….). He also brought us Runnamucks.

LotsOfNoise.com is an amazing website if you want to know what's going on in town, all the secret shows, the openings, and what people are talking/concerned about (forum)

Obviously, a ton of shows were booked in the Oak and Troy buildings by the people who lived there. It's difficult to recollect them all (Coachwhips, Cheeseburger, Jucifer, Deerhoof, The Epoxies, Naked Aggression, The Ex Models, Vaz, Wolf Eyes, Dead And Gone, Anton Bordman, Halo Perfecto, Against Me, Friends Forever, Cex, Numbers…) and one of the last and most notorious Halloween shows (Wrangler Brutes, Rah Bras, Lightning Bolt, Fat Day, Noxagt, Barnacled, White Mice, Vincebus Eruptum, Sightings…) which drew 700 to 800 people!



There are a few active **LABELS** in town: **LOAD RECORDS, CORLEONE RECORDS, HOSPITAL PRODUCTION, TRUCULENT, FORCE OF NATURE, TRASH ART!,** and **ARMAGEDDON LABEL**. Although not all of them are hardcore/punk labels, I include them anyway as altogether they represent Providence, and are punk in spirit if not in music.

ARMAGEDDON LABEL, formerly Crust Records, was created mainly to keep the **DROPDEAD** releases in print. It is run by Ben from Dropdead and me, Anne-Gaelle, well… I'm mostly the shitworker... We released the three Dropdead albums on vinyl and recently on CD, the Tragedy/Totalitar EP, and a co-release with **Hospital Productions**: **Prurient** *History of AIDS* CD (this is noise!). A Totalitar discography and a Hard To Swallow CD are the next projects; hopefully they'll be out very soon. We also started to put out demo cassettes of local acts, which are mostly metal (**Nefarious**, and in the near future **Basilisk, The Body, Sorcery**). We also run a small t-shirt business with more than 55 designs.

CONTRAST RECORDS is a label and a record store, focusing mainly on hardcore straight edge. They released the Piebald/In Vain EP, The Get Up Kids *Loveteller* EP, Corm *Everything Steamlined* CD, and the local, **VERSE** *Four Songs* CDEP/7". Contrast is currently on hiatus because Al is out traveling and Sean from Verse has taken over the store. I am unsure if he is keeping the Contrast name for the store. **CORLEONE RECORDS** is an interesting label with a wide-open horizon musical wise. Locally, they have released **BARNACLED, ALEC K REDFEARN AND THE EYESORES,** and **MAHI MAHI.**

FORCE OF NATURE PRODUCTIONS' focus is on dark ambient soundscapes.

LOAD RECORDS is not your regular label—they really care about what's going on around town and are very active people in the community. They are one of the huge reasons why the Providence scene exploded worldwide. The Load sound is a brainstorming mix of noise and heaviness. Load Records has released local bands such as: **LIGHTNING BOLT, NECRONOMITRON, VINCEBUS ERUPTUM, KITES, MR. BRINKMAN** and **PLEASUREHORSE.**

HOSPITAL PRODUCTIONS is a noise label, which is a fan of limited tapes, box set, weird packaging, and a whole concept for every release. They have released Deathpile, Skin Crime (awesome silk screened cover for their last LP!), Richard Ramirez, Hair Police, and Nicole 12, which are all out of town bands.

TRASH ART! is a label focusing mainly on hardcore however heaviness and creativity is a must for this label, nice and elaborate art-

work reminding a bit of Hydrahead. Home of Paindriver, Another Dead Juliet, Backstabbers Inc, X Files X, As The Sun Sets, Apt 213, 16, Today Is The Day…

TRUCULENT is also a noise label, brought to town by Hospital Productions—they have released **Prurient** and **Immaculate:** Grotesque harsh noise.

Now on to **LOCAL BANDS**… get ready, we have lots of them! These are not being divided by style, you can figure it out by the descriptions.

ADVOCATE plays blasting fast thrash. Influences from metal, and hardcore are definitely present, and a bit of grind can be heard here and there. These guys are really good—they have a CD out on Happy Couples Never Last and various 7"s. I'm not really sure if they're still around.

ALEC K REDFEARN AND THE EYESORES is a quiet band, with accordion, mellow songs, and ballads. It reminds me a lot of the music played in a café at closing time.

ALL THOSE OPPOSED are a newer punk/hardcore band. They are very raw and fun and currently have only released a demo, but have been playing lots of shows.

ANOTHER DEAD JULIET is the only active local band from the Trash Art! Roster—they play fast, passionate, super melodic, and unpretentious hardcore punk rock with short songs and emotional lyrics. No bullshit, no pretension—just hardcore. You won't get bored!

ATHLETIC AUTOMATON is a duo consisting of drum and guitar featuring one member of Arab On Radar, they play instrumental, heavy, noisy, rock. They're really good!

BARNACLED is an avant-garde style, jazz/big band deal, with seven members (drums, electronic, baritone saxophone, alto saxophone, percussion, French horn, bassoon, and accordion). You get the idea!

BASILISK are also metal, they are black/thrash, very catchy and simple, yet long songs. The demo is a must!

THE BODY is a two-piece heavy stoner rock band, with tortured vocals. They are expatriates from Arkansas, but unfortunately half of the band moved back.

THE CHINESE STARS is a follow up from Arab on Radar. Musically they are very similar to Arab on Radar but with more bass and slower songs.

CONTEMPT FOR HUMANITY is the only Discharge-oriented punk band in town, big Steve from Distraught is on bass just to give you the heads up. Nothing out yet so it's a bit difficult to do a decent review.

DAUGHTERS was formed from the remains of As The Sun Sets. Less than a minute long songs with noisy math riffs, blast beats—very technical—and screaming vocals. People into As The Sun Sets, The Locust, Discordance Axis, Melt Banana, Arab On Radar, Charles Bronson, and the likes should check them out!

THE DETERRENTS is a very professional rock band, Jason Kendall from the Amazing Royal Crowns is an amazing singer. These guys enjoy what they do and you know it!

THE DIGS is a rock and roll band, with three guitars or two guitars and a harmonica. They also feature a woman on drums.

DROPDEAD are still kicking, better than ever and still as fast, currently writing new songs and there are rumors about a West Coast tour this summer...hopefully see you there.

FOOTBALL RABBIT is an interesting trio—rocking bass, a noisy guitar, and a finger drum machine. They play a mix of indie, rock, stoner rock, and noisy songs…recently they surprised everybody by switching the drum machine with a real drum set.

FOURHORSE is a noisy, heavy, stoner rock band. They have very few vocals, two basses—very loud and very good.

GET KILLED is a kick ass band. They are very energetic and remind me a lot of the early 80s US hardcore/punk ala Black Flag. Fast, short, and dirty! They put out an amazing limited edition demo, with silk screened covers—very unique packaging. They have a plus: two women play in the band (guitar and bass) and they moved a lot on stage, which is unfortunately pretty fucking rare! They just recorded for their first EP.

GLORIOUS MONSTER is a drum face off with two drummers playing at the same time. They mix really intense drumbeats with samplers and effects boxes.

I, DESTROYER is a hybrid metal/crust band, definitely a bit of both, if they had something out, I would definitely put one in the metal section and one in the punk/hardcore section. They have a big sound with guitar solos and a fantastic drummer. They are a really good band…and an all-star band too (featuring members of Dropdead, Paindriver, Suffering Bastards, and As The Sun Sets.)

IT'S A FUCKING TRAP is a noisy metal core act, a bit all over the place like Daughters…they are really good live, all dressed in black with masks on and a strobe light. They have an amazing demo with beautifully silk-screened covers, but rumors are that they may be breaking up.

JAPANESE KARAOKE AFTER LIFE EXPERIMENT is another duo; drums, keyboards, and/or guitar they are really influenced by Mindflayer.

KITES is a one-man noise project, he built his own electronic equipment. Pretty crazy shit!

LIGHTNING BOLT is an insane drum and bass duo, one of those bands that refuse to play on stage. They are notorious for their intense live sets, the drummer wears a mask with a contact mike inside, and he's surrounded by stacks of bass amps. One of the craziest live bands I've ever seen in my life!

MAHI MAHI is another duo but this time with drums and keyboards. Two men dressed all in white. It's late night dancing music -- really good.

THE MIDNIGHT CREEPS are a punk band that reminds me a lot of the 70's New York punk scene. They are woman fronted -- she has the sexiest voice and the attitude to go with it! Really promising stuff.

MINDFLAYER is another duo with Brian Chippendale (Lightning Bolt) on drums, and Mat Brinkman (Forcefield, Mystery Brinkman, Meerk Puffy) on noise electronic. Total improvisation—the drumming of Lighting Bolt, with noise/electronic. Really intense and loud!

MOMENT is a super violent noise act, with short sets and screaming vocals.

MR. BRINKMAN: former Forcefield member and current Mindflayer member, has a few solo electronic/sound collage/industrial/noise

releases, check them out they all are very unique!

NECRONOMITRON: Two guitars and drums, a weird mix a pure prog with Man Is The Bastard. Guitar solo craziness, heavy, and loud.

NEFARIOUS is one of the few metal bands from town. They're old school death metal in a way, mixed with black metal, crust and grind (see the influences here). The vocal are very mysterious: reminiscent of early Darkthrone/ Mayhem. They have very good guitar solos, complicated song structures, and very good and catchy melodies.

THE NIGHTMARE CONTINUES is a metal band, they are a bit all other the place, blasting drums, people that are into the newest metal/grind scene would dig them.

NO REGARD play very energetic and well executed melodic punk rock, very well written lyrics about the rock'n'roll lifestyle, with good bass lines and intelligible lyrics. They're good.

PLEASUREHORSE: one man electronic/noise project with the help of samplers, eight tracks, pedals, turntables, stacks of bass amps, and some more obscure utensils. Intense live!

PRURIENT is a one-man noise act, very intense and short live sets, he's well established in the noise scene. From harsh noise to more structured, ambient, power electronic noise, an infinite collection of releases. He's planning a tour with **Kites** and **Hair Police** late March/April.

SHORT. FAST. DEAD. plays very energetic thrash hardcore early 80s style. They only have a demo that they recorded in their practice space. They're really fun to watch live.

SINKING BODY is a one-man noise act from the remains of Men's Recovery Project.

SLOWDEATH is a one-man performance art with a Geiger counter.

SORCERY is an epic black metal act, Emperor-influenced, with really long songs, corpse paint and all.

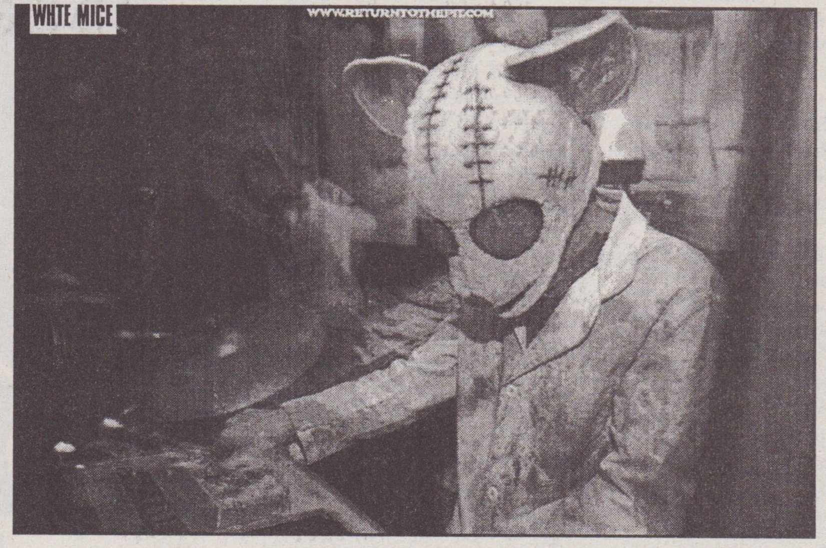
STRAIGHT TO HELL is a hardcore band strongly influenced by Scandinavian/Japanese hardcore (I think) with Anti Cimex guitar solos here and there. They have Aaron Ulcer on vocals, Brian Dead on drums, Gorman from Advocate on guitar and Josh Philbrick on bass. They have two seven inches out already and possibly an LP on the way.

SUFFERING BASTARDS is the only grind / noise core in town, and they are worth it! Double bass, blistering drums, and an insane masochist singer.

TINY HAWKS is a two-piece, emotive, guitar and drum band. Bizzaro-bonkers guitar playing and over-the-top (in a good way), caveman drumming. They play intricate, sincere, bearded, stoic, amazing, music.

THE TRAPS is one of the few garage bands in town. They have two guitars and no bass.

URDOG is an awesome prog band that would make a lot of the old kraut rock scene followers drop their jaw. They have one demo CDR out, the packaging by itself is already worth your bucks—it's silk screened with several colors. Girl on drums here too!



VERSE is a straight edge hardcore band with a big emo touch. They have the singer of **What Feeds the Fire** on vocals, and Eric, who was an old guitarist of **What Feeds the Fire.**

VINCEBUS ERUPTUM: sludge band with an insane singer and song topics (Who Farted?). Super heavy, pounding drums, super loud bass, and guitar. If you're into metal, heavy 70s rock, and the Brainbombs, then check them out!

WHITE MICE delivers one of the most insane live noise sets in town. Drums, guitar, and electronic, they all wear White Mice masks with the exception of the drummer, who wears some kind of gory mask. They have a demo, which is a CDR with a silk-screened cover. You can pull out the CD with a white string, which is the tail of the mouse. It includes stickers and is priced at $6.66.

That's it for the bands!!! Now on to other scene stuff!

There are a lot of radio shows that support local music scene: **BSR LIVE** is one of the most famous radio stations in town (well at least for our liking.) You can listen to the audio archives online at www.bsrlive.com. Local bands play every Thursday at 7 PM and spin records afterwards (Archives include shows by Mindflayer, Dropdead, White Mice, Etc.) BSR is also home of **JOANNE'S THEORY OF A RADIO SHOW**, which airs every Saturday from 9 pm to 10 pm and focuses on Providence bands often. There are also a few pirate radio stations on the West Side.

The arts and music scenes in Providence are really tightly connected and the silk-screened show posters are amazing proof. This is by far my favorite treat! I'm always exited to see what Brian Chippendale will come up with, or what crazy color/name combinations Mike Taylor will use. The girls at the Dirt Palace have a screen printing studio and some of the most beautiful posters come from there—it's always a trick to hang one of Pippi's poster without being covered in glitter, Xander uses different shapes and textures, Erin and Paula use gorgeous color combinations…

There are a few fanzines for which silk-screening is widely used as well. Leif does ***National Waste,*** which is a comic strip zine with a silk-screened cover. He also make calendars every year, and you should see that—the one for this year has about ten colors, every page is silk screened! Mike Taylor does the ***Scenery*** zine, which has comic-strip drawings—the latest one has a silk-screened cover as well. There's also the famous ***Paper Rodeo***—it's a free newspaper type zine. The front and back pages are advertising pages, but all the ads are specially made by the editors for the businesses. The rest of it is crazy comic strips. I love it!

This is what's going on in town, I omitted a few things like all the businesses that support the arts and music, the movie makers and movie festivals…all independents, the fairs and craft shows, bike builders, and I probably forgot some bands and people as well (sorry…)

This town is full of creativity and love for music/arts. It's also a small town, where everybody knows each other and there's not much room for rock star attitudes. Shows are big social events, and we're not going to let that be taken from us. We'll keep you updated, I swear.

If anyone is interested in getting some of the rare self released demos, posters, or fanzines, you can subscribe to **Armageddon Shop** email updates or check out the website. They carry a lot of local music and arts. Don't hesitate to get in touch with any questions.

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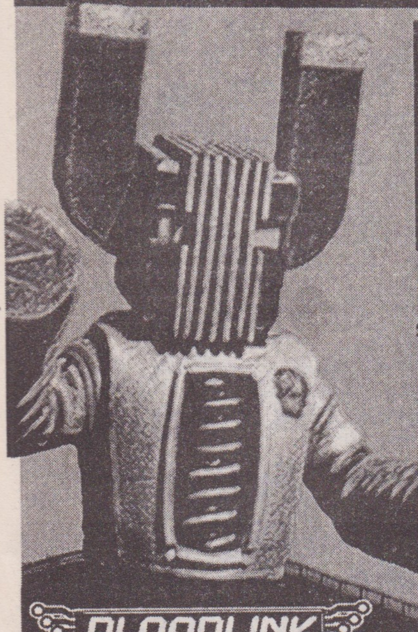

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Tear It up "Taking You Down With Me" CD/LP
World Burns to Death LP and the Ep's.

The AVOW Anthology - Book by Keith Rosson

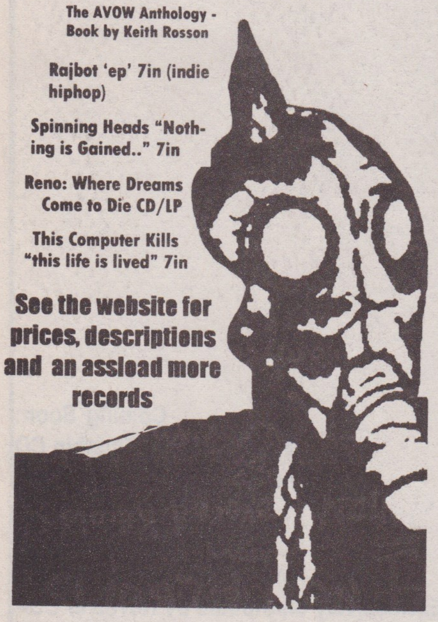
Rajbot 'ep' 7in (indie hiphop)

Spinning Heads "Nothing is Gained.." 7in

Reno: Where Dreams Come to Die CD/LP

This Computer Kills "this life is lived" 7in

See the website for prices, descriptions and an assload more records



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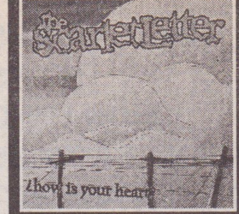

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is a photographer from Belgium and does Still Holding On Records. He recently contacted us to see if we'd be interested in running some of his photographs, and here they are. You can contact him via xshox@hotmail.com

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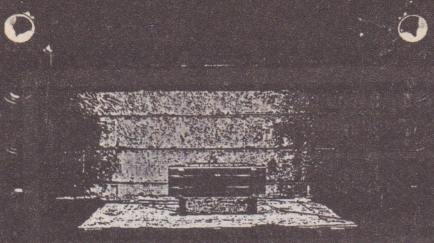

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VÄKIVALTAA!

Interview by Jani.

Väkivaltaa! is one of those raging bands that you probably haven't heard too much, unless you lived in Finland in mid-80s. And it's your loss, now you can start kicking yourself. They were from the city of Rauma, which is better known to be a home of such classics as Mellakka and Pohjasakka. Those bands can be considered big brothers of Väkivaltaa! Those guys introduced punk music and punk ethics to little kids that later formed not so lucky band called Väkivaltaa! They never did that many gigs, but there were a few, mostly local gigs.

These guys never really got any music out when they were around. (Well, some test pressings are made, but haven't seen any myself.) They have released *Elämä On Painajaist"* 7" on 540 Records couple of years ago. That shouldn't be too hard to find yet

I was told that Kari and Jouni used to be too drunk to even talk, only whistle and nod. That was after the band broke up and they were not sure what they wanted to do. One time after getting in a New Years eve brawl with some local rednecks at their favorite bar they broke every glass they could get their hands into and throwing them at the rednecks. They are quite more sober because at the time they had no money to buy beer at the store, and seeing as how they used credit at the bar with no glasses, they are getting a bit more productive. Kari started to get involved with all kinds of civil disobedience acts and other things.

Kari is still pretty active in all kinds of activist organizations. He's in Finnish Attac and other organizations fighting for the better world. The day after he explains it with a bit clearer voice:

"Yeah, I always believed that one man makes a difference. And I still do!!! I am actually going to India for a month in January and February. There is this Global Social Forum and there are thousands of people trying to figure out a way to lessen the poverty and inequality in the world. You'll probably hear about if you are even slightly interested in things like this. There's another WTO meeting in the spring too and I'm going to be there. I'm not throwing rocks, not this time, but I'll be inside there negotiating with all those greedy "free trade" supporters. Their free trade is freedom."

Jouni finally moved out of his mom's house last year. He is still the only one that lives in Rauma. Not too much happening for him, that's what he says himself anyway. He has a band together with Perttula (who used to be in Mellakka, as mentioned before...). They changed instruments this time, Perttula is now in drums and Jouni plays guitar. Jouni says it's more Motörhead than anything else.

Jouni: "It doesn't matter to me what you write in that fanzine, since I still don't speak English. I can't read it. Never really liked school and tried to stay out as much as I could. And I could stay out quite a bit! I'm now trying to learn English and German by myself. I'm taking some classes too. I want to learn how to speak these languages. So I want to say this to kids, learning languages is cool! I don't have better things to do so I started learning something, finally!"

Markku lives in the northern Finland and loves it up there. He lives near the Arctic Circle and has his own workshop there. He's making all kinds of handicraft out of wood. His cousin has a big reindeer farm near there, but Markku said that's not his thing. But he likes the beauty of nature up there and the fact that no one bothers him too much. He wants to stay alone most of the time anyway. He doesn't go to anywhere that much, an accident with a moose still feels in his leg...

Tuomo lives in Helsinki now. You can find him in some of the bars for sure. He's still making music and wants to start a band again. Not sure if that means Väkivaltaa! or just some band. He just quit his job. He said that he felt he was giving them way too much of his time and energy. Tuomo says that he always had this hate towards authority and it's something that stays if you get "infected" by it.

TUOMO

This interview was done during the Christmas time 2003. That's in fact the only time of year that you can get all these guys to same place at the same time. Nowadays they all live far away from each other and have other things to do. Lots of Finnish beer was consumed during the interview, some parts of the story were totally blurry in the tape afterwards, but that is what this band is all about. Blur. Not too many questions were made or at least answered. It was more like a class union, everybody just speaks about the common history they have.

MRR: How did you guys found out about punk in the first place? The first wave of Finnish punk had dried out when you got involved with the scene, or was it?
Markku: Well, we were just little kids misbehaving… That's how you become punk, right… Actually I think it's Kari's fault that we ever met those punks who lived in Rauma. Kari actually tried to burn a house down in the center of Rauma. That must be the most horrible thing you can do there. As you may know that the old center of Rauma is few centuries old and it still has all these old and small wooden houses in the old center. There's on glass or concrete, it's made out of wood…
Kari: Yeah, the old city center is even in the United Nations world heritage list. It's protected by international as well as national laws.
Markku: Kari being this irresponsible little misfit that he was, and still is (laughter!), he was bored and set a trash can on fire. Unfortunately that trashcan was by the wall of one of these houses and the wall caught on fire. Not a good thing, not a good thing at all. He didn't actually burn down the house, but that wall looked black as hell.
Jouni: Yeah, it looked like it was the secret door down to hell! Now we know what the hell were you trying to do!!!
Tuomo: I was with Kari at the place, but I didn't set anything on fire. Kari is a year older than I was and I was like 10 years old at the time. But I remember it looked really cool to see the wall burning. Oh boy, did we run like hell after that. Some one had seen us running and of course we got into trouble.
Kari: It was not really bad. Luckily in Finland you won't get any jail or anything if you're under 15 years of age. So we had to go see all these therapists and psychiatrists and what not… and we had to pay some fines of course.
Tuomo: We were not among the most popular kids in the town after that. No one wanted to see us in the center, since we were dangerous. Ha! We were just kids. But remember that this is a small city, so basically everyone knows everybody else or their parents at least. So
Kari: After that we started hanging out with these punks. No one liked punks anyway and no one liked us. So it was a deal made in hell before we even knew about it. We had something in common with the punks. That's how we got involved and then we dragged Markku and Jouni with us.
Markku: That's true, we knew those guys from school and they made these tapes with bands that had cool names like Lama and Kaaos. Kaaos is still one of the best names for bands ever.
Jouni: I got involved with all this shit since I didn't have anything else to do. I wasn't really interested in anything. So I started hanging out with these guys and look at me now. I'm still here. I still don't have anything better to do with my life and I wouldn't want anything else. Here I am surrounded by my friends and I have a beer in my hand. I must've done something right, though I sure as hell don't know what that is.
MRR: How did you end up having a band?
Tuomo: That's what we are discussing here right now, you can keep your mouth closed, ok…
Kari: Tuomo has a big brother called Pauli and he was hanging with punks so we kind of got to know Perttula from Mellakka. He wasn't in Mellakka at the time. He joined them later, but he was already a punk. He had all these Discharge and Motörhead records and still does. We got to lots of stuff from Pauli and Perttula. They played all kinds of tapes and records to us little kids. For some reason unknown to me we started hanging in their rehearsal place.
Markku: Probably we wanted to be there, since there were no adults watching you and you could do what ever you wanted to do. No rules really, though there were rehearsal room rules, but those were ok to us.
Jouni: You should have seen Tuomo's mom's face when his brother and their friends cut him a mohawk in that same rehearsal place.
Tuomo: Did she scream like hell! That was pretty damn loud. Kari: At that point there was no turning back, people will remember a mohawk in a small city like Rauma. Labeled us punks. That's what we were. But when did you decide to form a band?
Jouni. Oh yeah, that was the question right?
Kari: One day some of the Mellakka members didn't show up and they didn't have rehearsal that day at all. So we thought that maybe we could entertain ourselves, if they were not coming to play for us. That's what we thought, that they would only show up to entertain us.
Jouni: I think it was only me and you (Kari) the first time.
Kari: Yep, I took the guitar, which was actually a bass but that I found out only later, and you were damaging the drums.
Jouni: That was fun. Being obnoxious

still, but I could be louder than before. I liked that.
Markku: Those guys were really into noise and we heard about them "playing" afterwards maybe a million times.
Tuomo: I guess those guys didn't have a choice but to play with us. No one else would be crazy enough to join a band that no one knows how to play their instruments.
Kari: But we really practiced a lot in the beginning. It was fun and it was something to do. Something productive.
Tuomo: We really entertained ourselves and only ourselves I think. We were horrible. That was around 83, right?
MRR: What were your influences? Was there a band that you wanted to sound like?
Kari: Discharge
Jouni: and Disorder
Tuomo: and Terveet Kädet
Markku: and Kaaos. I'd also say Lama, though we thought that we could never play that good. So we stuck with what we could…
Kari: In the beginning we sounded like crap. It was total noise. We didn't have any clue how to play the instruments. I remember listening to our rehearsal tapes and thought that those were really good. Then I listened those couple of years later and laughed really hard. We had no idea what we were doing.
Tuomo: I learned to play when I was trying to play cover songs. None of us had any idea how to write a song. So we tried to figure out other people's songs… and ended up doing some of our own.
Markku: I remember going to gigs and looking people at the stage. Oh, that's what you are supposed to do up there. We didn't have any idea about anything really. We were just so young and ignorant at the time. Luckily we grew up a little.
Jouni. Did we?
Kari: There's still something that pisses me off. At that point we were still so young that we were not able to travel to other cities and we didn't really even care to. It was easy not to care to travel, since we didn't have any money and our parents wouldn't let us go anyway. To be honest I don't think it never even occurred to us that we could go see bands in other cities. At that point you just complain that why the hell are those bands not coming to *my* city. That's why I missed Discharge in Lepakko, Helsinki in 1982. I want to say to everybody… Go see those bands you like, it may be your last chance!
Tuomo: Discharge was really good in Puntala this year. And I didn't even care about Discharge in 1982. I was too young for that.
Jouni: Yeah, it was fun to see other people get older too… even Discharge.
(Lengthy discussion about Discharge…)
MRR: Haven't seen any interviews from you guys ever. Why? Was there ever made any?
Markku: Well there are not many made really. There's this one fanzine called *Lukuhetki*. I think their first issue has our interview. Maybe it was the second issue of Lukuhetki, can't remember really. The same guy who was making this fanzine, Jarkko is his name, also did this compilation tape called...
Jouni: What the hell was it???
Tuomo: I think it was called *Punkkia Pikkukaupungeista*. There were some other bands there too... I think Laahaus was there and Poikkeustila too... some others. Can't remember. I don't think I have that tape myself.
Kari: But there were some other compilation tapes that we were on too, right?
Tuomo: Uh, yeah maybe, but no idea what those were called. I remember being really fucking proud when I heard that we are on tape together with Painajainen. They were one of my favorites. By the way I was happy to go to Puntala this summer and see them again after so many years.
Markku: There was one tape that had some Terveet Kädet live tracks on it, wasn't there?
MRR: What does punk mean to you now?
Tuomo: Musically it doesn't mean as much to as it did back then. But the most important thing is not the music anyway, but it's the politics behind it and that's what I've always kept inside and I guess I couldn't get rid of it even if I tried. I guess punk made me do what I do today.
Jouni: I'm as punk as I ever was. Still listen to that stuff every fucking day. Though I don't drink as much as I did. I try to do something else instead.
Kari: I'm not listening as much music as I did. I'm not listening to any music that much, but I still like punk the best. I like the old stuff, can't keep up with the new anyway. I don't really look like a punk, do I? I actually do listen to it quite a bit, not everyday like Jouni, but still…
Jouni: I don't care to wear my studded jacket anymore, it's so heavy and I tend to get lazy. It's not very practical during the winter. It's pretty cold here.
Markku: I don't really see anyone who's involved in punk where I live. So my old friends and old records are really my only contact to the punk. I see my friends rarely, but I do have a mobile phone and I know how to use it. I don't go to gigs, but there are no gigs where I'm living now. There are not even people there, so who the hell would even organize anything there. It's far away from anything, well Arctic Circle is near there. I like living there for now, but I realize that if it starts to depress me, I can leave it behind and move on. I like that. I know I have the choice and I can do it.
MRR: Did you record something else than those tracks that have now been released as *Elämä On Painajaista* EP?
Jouni: Yes we did. But the sound quality is not that good. At least not in my copy.
Markku: If we ever get those original master tapes back from the studio, we could probably do a proper release out of it someday.

DISORDER

Kari: Do you think that they have the master tapes in the studio?
Markku: I think they have kept a copy of everything that is recorded there. I'm not sure though. We should ask.
Tuomo: I have that recording only on tape myself, but it's really worn out.
Jouni: I like the songs on the first recording better than the ones on the *Elämä* EP.
MRR: I have seen Väkivaltaa! 1st 7" on some people's want list, but does it even exist??
Jouni: Uh, let's not talk about that. Makes me angry.
Kari: Well, there are some test pressings made, but that's it.
Markku: Can't really say that there's a record released, since it really isn't. Test pressing is not a real release in my opinion. Tuomo: We never had money to do a proper release and never bothered to ask any labels to do it. I don't know if any labels would have been interested in it. I've no idea where my test press is. I think I sold it years ago… or traded for a bottle of wine or something.
Jouni: We didn't pay for the test pressing, did we?
Markku: No one did. Finnvox sent us the test press with an invoice. We didn't pay it, so the whole pressing was never made. Maybe that's why never really contacted and tried again, since we fucked up with them in the first place.
Kari: We could transfer the music from the test press to a computer and make a CDR. We could make a complete discography…
Jouni: Why? Fuck CD's. I still don't have a CD-player and I never will. Punk is made to be played on vinyl.
Markku: I'd rather have vinyl too. Though I do have a CD-player, and I like some of the re-issues on CD. Like that those singles compilations that Clay did in the 90s, you have all the singles in the same disc and you don't need to turn the vinyl every other minute. That's maybe the only good thing in CD's.
Jouni: I need another beer… Is this interview done yet, or have we even started doing it?
Tuomo: Is this the end or is this even the beginning of the end?
Kari: Let's have a break.
The break was pretty long...

The FUSE!

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"THE SOUND OF YOUTH FRUSTRATION."

INTERVIEW: Mitch Cardwell
PHOTOS: Mark Murrman

F-2: Hey, at last night's show, there was a girl who got hurt while we were playing and I just wanted to apologize in the interview. Does anybody know that girl that got hurt?

MRR: I didn't see anyone get hurt...

F-2: I think I did some spin thing with my guitar and I accidentally hit her in the face and she walked away.

F-1: Did you see it?

MRR: No, but I remember when you ran straight into me and my friend with the camera.

ALL: HAHAHA!

F-2: Well, I wanna apologize to that girl in the interview...

MRR: Speaking of which, the standard interview shit starts with you guys saying your names and what you do in the band. Are you gonna use your real names?

F-2: Na, man. F-1, F-2, and F-3, alphabetically by last name.

F-1: Drums.

F-2: Vocals and guitar.

F-3: Bass.

MRR: Great, this should be fun to transcribe. How long ago did you guys start?

F-3: About three years ago

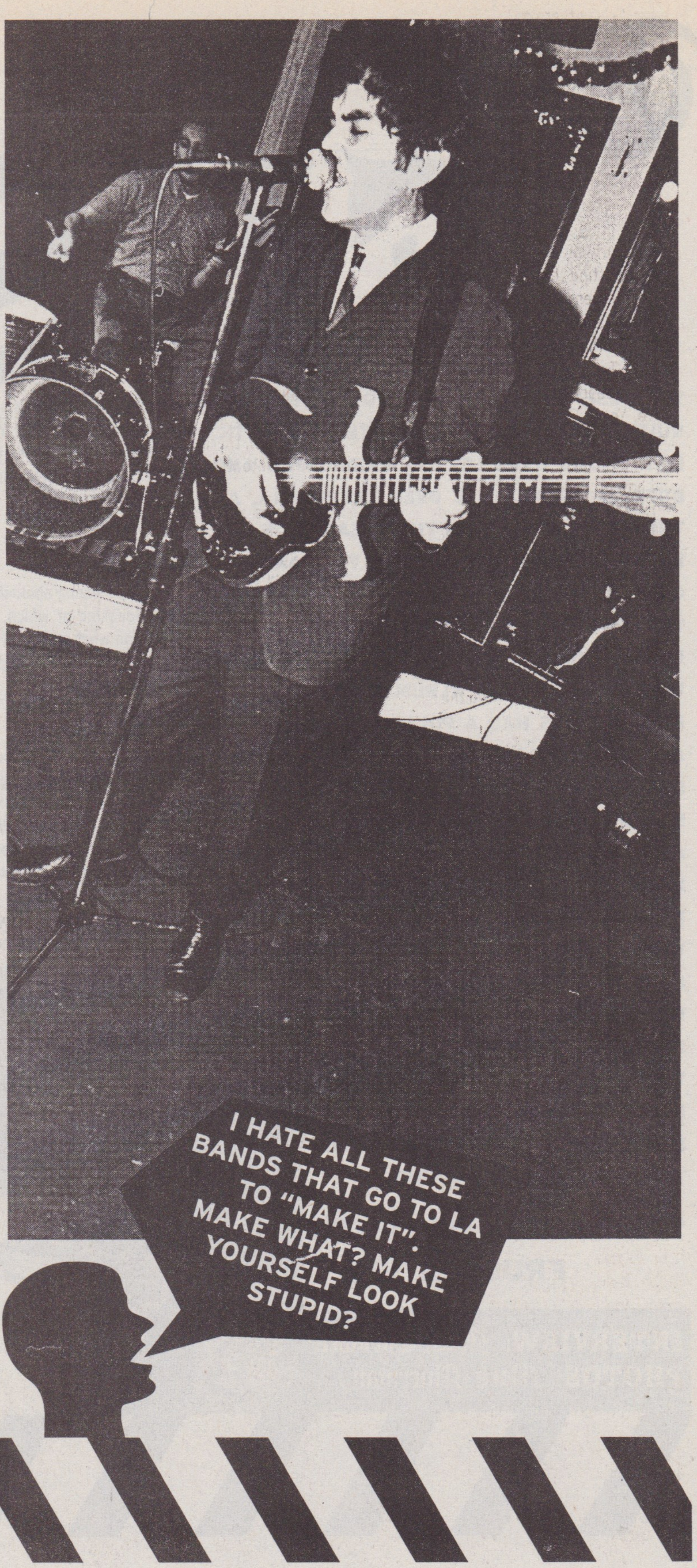
MRR: Were you in any bands before that?

F-3: F-2 and me go back like ten years in bands together.

F-2: Yeah. We were in your basic neighborhood punk rock bands, nothing crazy or anything. Hardcore ghetto punk rock. The kind of bands you start when you are just learning to play your instruments. Backyard circle-pit stuff. Don't say the name of the bands, because they turned out to be a bunch of pricks.

MRR: So your other stuff never left the backyard, but now you play all over LA. How is that?

F-2: We only play like three spots in LA. It's really weird. LA still lives out this whole delusional hot spot Sunset fuckin' Rock 'N' Roll Mecca fantasy. It's bullshit. I hate all these bands that go to LA to "make it". Make what? Make yourself look stupid?
F-1: Yeah, they're stuck in the mid-80s. The club promoters give little respect to the local bands. The sound guys are assholes...
F-2: Even the indie-rock promoters are buying into it. It's really shitty. In LA, nobody is a fucking music fan. What happened to music fans? People are either scamming their friend's bar or trying to get "signed" or whatever...
MRR: So are you guys an "LA band"?
F-2: Well, we live there, but...
F-1: No, we don't share that mentality.
F-2: There's this comp that just came out, Let's Get Rid Of LA. It's a really good record. All those bands on there, those are the bands we play with and they share our views and stuff. I'm sure that they won't admit it, but they've expressed the same level of displeasure about what's going on.
MRR: You get that sense when you listen to that record, I think.
F-1: Yeah, and we pretty much only play shows with those bands. It's like the same show every week, only with different configurations.
F-2: It's awesome too, because none of us sound like each other. I think it has all the makings of something. In LA, there's all this talent and this underdog mentality. It has the makings of something big. Well, not "big", but...?
MRR: Important?
F-2: Yeah! It's gonna change people's minds about LA.
MRR: While it shouldn't be an issue at all, have you encountered any difficulties in playing around because you are Chicano?
F-3: People in LA are used to seeing Chicanos in bands. The only times we feel a little intimidated is when were on the road, in like Utah or Idaho, and you pull in to a gas station. Now I can't tell if it's because we're Chicanos dressed like mod punkers, or if it's the fact that were stumbling out of the van like Chespirito! There's a Chicano reference for ya!
F-1: We don't see anything awkward or weird about being proud of our ethnic backgrounds and playing the type of music that we play. People do pay attention to the fact that we aren't skinny white kids, like it's either a taboo that we are breaking or some new ground that we are covering. We are a threat to those who fear diversity, fear progress and fear change. They are the ones that are going down when the shit hits the fan! Fuck 'em, let 'em be scared!
MRR: Would you say that it's a big part of your band, or something too much emphasis is placed on?
F-3: I would say it's a big part of The Fuse! We communicate a lot in Spanish, or have these funny "Fuse-isms" that are based in the Spanish language. We will make reference to Spanish and Mexican history because it seems more real or "romantic" to us. There's this sort of raw, beautiful, primal feeling we can connect to in our Hispanic heritage. The record has a series of stories in Spanish that F-2 wrote. Some people may not want to translate these stories, but if they do they will see a connection from what the stories say to how F-2 writes lyrics for songs. It's just something that evolved from who we are, where we live, and how we grew up.
MRR: Would you say your sound is born out of all the stuff you've mentioned about LA too?
F-2: Of course! It's a product of our surroundings. You internalize your surroundings and you make 'em part of who you are. We do sound like the dirty, run-down streets that we come from. And it's great! There's something about the immigrant communities we're from. Everybody is always hustling around and moving. Our music, no matter how grim and brutal, I think there is still a glimmer of hope and romanticism in.



MRR: I'd say there more than a glimmer of romanticism...

F-2: Yeah! We have a song that is about planning armed resistance, but in the same chorus, it cuts to a guy kissing his girl goodbye and there's blood on her lips. Weird stuff...Images of a young Fidel Castro with one of his lovers in an apartment, both pointing Magnums into the wall.

MRR: Even with all that, it's still pretty rough-sounding though...

F-2: The songs all have this unrest, like something is always about to happen, but we try to include those romantic elements in the lyrics. It's like basic human necessity. You don't have to play 50 million changes and riffs to be an artsy punk band. You can incorporate those complexities into how you tell a story with the music and the mood. Seems like people don't really bother putting that stuff in anymore, but I love it. Bands like Television and Modern Lovers really paid attention to how the music and the story worked together. Songwriting has taken a big shit lately.

MRR: On the back of your record, there's also all that stuff about "getting drunk off of the blood of the corpse" and...

F-2: "Weapons become instruments of peace" and all that.

MRR: Yeah! That was pretty revealing to me. Your records and live show aren't exactly easy to get through. For lack of a better word, there's violence there, both on record and live. I'm assuming that all ties into what you wrote and how you present it, right?

F-1: Yeah, it's primal and raw. And it's us. Like sometimes, we'll have really shitty days at home or work, and we'll have a show and it's an outlet.

F-2: One of the best things, I think, is that there are parts of the show that we all feel really angry and frustrated, but the song will shift to one of the romantic things, like the narrator having a recollection of an affair or whatever, and everything slows down. A lot happens to me when we play shows.

MRR: It seems to me that a lot of your lyrics are equally applicable to both your political beliefs and your ideas about music, like you could interpret them either way. I'm thinking the same could be said for when you are chanting for revolution in your songs. Like it's social, but musical too.

F-2: Of course! That's the beauty of it. People gave Pete Townsend a lot of shit for trying to over-intellectualize rock 'n' roll, but I think there are a lot of intellectual aspects in it. A lot of our stuff has a socialist slant, but I've never taken a political class in college or anything. I had to learn that shit when I was little because of the way I grew up.

F-1: We catch a lot of flack because people say that stuff is all a gimmick, like fuckin' International Noise Conspiracy or something. That pisses us off. I think we see that struggle first hand where we live. It seems like they use it as a marketing tool.

F-2: Every time they come to LA, it's all sloganeering. Put your fucking book away! It's not for you. What happened to fucking activists going to a community to fucking be a part of it? It's fucking lame. "We have a $3000 guarantee at our show. We have a vegan fucking deli tray that costs more than the opening bands get paid. But we're socialists!" Fuck you, man.

MRR: HAHA! What would you guys say about the reaction to your live performances?

F-3: Really positive actually... No complaints so far.

MRR: Nobody has come up saying "Fuck You!" for hitting them or anything?

F-1: No. Actually, quite the opposite! For some reason, I don't know if they're like super masochists or something, but people come up to us all excited if we rough them up!

F-3: It's human nature. I think they understand that it's not intentional. It's just part of our show...

F-2: It's like last night with that girl. I think they know that we are sincere. The people last night probably saw me grab the drinks out of their hands and throw them against the wall and stuff, but I came right back and let them know how much I appreciate them for being there. There's a sincere connection between the audience and us when we play. Our shows are like a 20-minute party that just got way out of control.

F-1: And its fun! It's like wresting with your little brother! We're all family, it's good.

MRR: Speaking for myself and other people I've talked to regarding your records, it seems like your sound isn't exactly easy to describe. No two people say the same thing, which I find interesting. Care to offer any descriptions of your own? How would you describe your sound?

F-2: The way I see it, and this will either clear things up or muddy it up even more, is that there is a strong emphasis on the songwriting aspect. We're using whatever is contemporary and now and filtering it through what we like.

F-1: We get compared to The Fall a lot.

MRR: People have mentioned that to me too, but I think that probably has to do with the fact that you are confrontational, but not in some stupid, bonehead way.

F-1: Yeah. Or that "Crass Meets The Who" thing.

F-2: That's fucking strange!

MRR: For me, just so you can totally fucking hate me, I think you guys are a soul band.

F-1: That's fucking perfect!

F-2: People give us a hard time about that part too. Like people talk shit because of the suits and the mod thing and call us pretty punks and stuff, not real mod music. I'm thinking that if The Jam or The Who had heard Black Flag or Fugazi records, they would've incorporated that shit immediately! Why can't we do it? It's still around for us...

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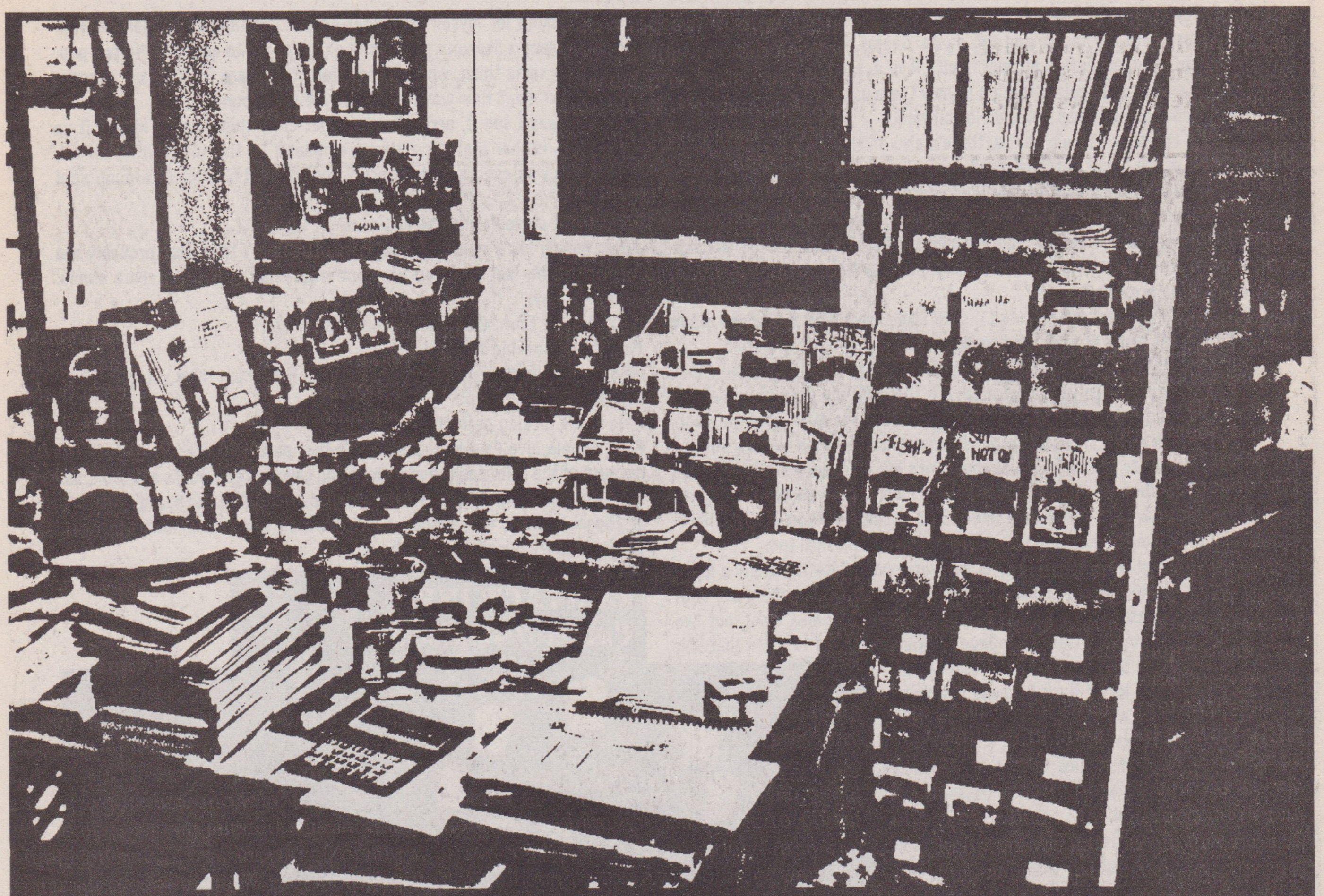

MRR: How were you introduced to the zine community?
Microcosm: In roughly 1993, I went to see some bands play at a bar in Cleveland. This guy Jake Kelly was selling his zine *Summer*. I bought it and followed every issue after that. I had been really burnt out on reading as a result of high school and had pretty much given up on it. *Summer* was much better reading than I had found anywhere else at the time, and is still one of the best zines I've ever seen.
MRR: You started Microcosm Publishing in 1996. Why did you start? Did you feel there was a lack of strong distribution for zines?
Microcosm: Well, in the beginning, I never realized how much Microcosm would grow, and zines were only part of the focus. I was just bored and needed a hobby, because all of my roommates worked during the day and I worked at night. I felt that doing a zine wasn't enough and that I wanted to be more involved in the community. Initially, it was just doing mail order out of my bedroom. I had a box of zines and records that I liked that couldn't be found many places elsewhere.
MRR: What was it like getting off the ground?
Microcosm: I still don't really think it's gotten off the ground. If you are asking about the beginning, it was a bit hectic. A few months in, I was attending college, working 40-50 hours at my job, and doing Microcosm in my spare time. There was a good amount of struggle involved, which I've kind of gotten away from—going from being very blue collar to doing very white-collar type of work. There was and still is a lot of resistance from everywhere. My parents were always very unsupportive, and no one in my family really understands what I do.
MRR: Why is the focus on personal zines?
Microcosm: I don't really think we focus on personal zines at all. We distribute the zines that we are aware of and are submitted to us. I would describe most of what we distribute as political before it's personal. I mean this is all semantics, of course, as the two are highly intertwined. We publish *Brainscan*, a personal zine, and are about to publish *Journalsong*, another personal zine, mostly because they are available to us, and they are friends that are easy to work with. We published Al Burian's new book, *Things are Meaning Less*, because I think he is a clever, talented writer. I never thought about the fact that it would be called a "personal zine" until the reviews started rolling in. I think most of what we publish is practical information, in terms of learning how to do/make things or for learning about yourself through reading someone else's introverted shit.
MRR: This brings up a point regarding how zines are classified. In the latest issue of *Cryptic Slaughter*, Giovanni goes to great lengths to distinguish his zine from "personal" zines, noting that he feels it is a catch-all phrase, and that a great deal of writing is personal. I am among those people who tend to lump zines together in easy categories for purposes of organization. Do you think too many people throw these vague terms around? Do you think the way in which zines are received needs to be rethought? Do labels like "personal" or "political" or "music zine" help to sort out zines, if only on a surface level, or do they narrow audiences?
Microcosm: Well, sometimes for the ease of explaining something to someone else it is

PUBLISHING

Microcosm Publishing has existed for nearly eight years, from its inception as a record label through its current function as a publisher, distributor, and active promoter of zines. Microcosm's creative critical assessment of zines and its passionate involvement in the community make it a valuable entity in the punk scene and beyond. Here follows a chat with Microcosm founder, Joe Biel.

Interview by Jill Hubley

easier to say "it's a personal zine" but when it really comes down to it, I try to go to greater lengths to really distinguish one zine from another. While "personal" and "political" function well as buzz words, I don't think they don't say anything anymore. They've been sterilized and overused to the point that they are meaningless. I think part of the reason for this is people don't always have words and thoughts articulate enough to describe something as personal and touching as a zine. I'm not sure there is one way that zines are thought of. Maybe I'm too entrenched in it. We sell zines to people of different ages and backgrounds, people that aren't necessarily interested in punk music. As a result we go to great lengths to try to make the descriptions accessible to different kinds of people. I think any kind of categorization tends to limit an audience. On the other hand, there needs to be something that creates interest in those zines.

MRR: What do you think about audio zines? What do you think about the change in format?

Microcosm: I've made audio zines before and, while it's certainly a very different and unique format, I don't think anyone fully explored it to the extent that it should be, ya know? It has so much potential and flexibility that I'd like to see someone really run with. Something in the way of having friends with talented speaking voices read/recite some things and really mix it up or do something like a concept piece across 90 minutes or something. But again, as I learned doing audio zines, it's still very important to do things over and edit.

MRR: And, along those lines, what do you think of "webzines?"

Microcosm: I have very little respect for webzines. I think that's partially because webzines were killing print zines for a while, because it was cheaper, easier, and required less active networking and work. I think it's too easy to throw something up on the internet and let it stagnate there. I don't respect the internet as a medium. Also, due to the popularity of the net in recent years, most of the time when I throw around the word 'zine' or put up posters for the Zine Symposium, people think I'm talking exclusively about webzines and have no concept of print zines. Granted, there are well done webzines (like Sincerebrutality.com) that really could change my opinion, if there were just more of them that were well done and had that much time put into them.

MRR: You don't sell many music zines. Any reason why?

Microcosm: We used to distribute a larger quantity of music zines than we do now but they were very unpopular. I think that's mostly because people can buy them in local stores so it is unnecessary to mail order them. We've always thrived by distributing stuff you can't get elsewhere. We do still distribute a few free music zines and they still are quite unpopular! We don't get many music zines submitted to us and the ones that are don't fall into the spectrum of what we distribute (i.e., they are about glossy mainstream music) or we don't think we could sell a substantial amount of them. Aside from that, Alex and I both were really getting into zines at a time ('95 -'99), when newsprint music zines were *everywhere*. If you made a zine it was assumed to contain record reviews and coverage of bands. So maybe other people felt that there should be more an alternative to that, and the current climate is a backlash against that.

MRR: What you're saying here brings up a question I have regarding content: Sometimes people who make music zines seem to gravitate toward a formulaic columns/interviews/record reviews layout, because that's what they've seen in other zines. Sometimes it's hard to break the mold, and you'll see a lot of the same bands interviewed, etc. Do you think the same type of content hurdle exists in the realm of non-music zines, a different kind of mold, where many new zine writers may try to write stories, like *Cometbus*?

Microcosm: I agree completely; I think a lot of people read other zines and think there is a "mold" to follow for making zines. I've always believed the beauty of making zines is that you can make it about whatever you want. There is no validation process; no one gives you an okay. You just decide what you want to create and then you do it. Of course this leads to tens of thousands of zines in existence, but I'd much rather that everyone created something original rather than feeling like there is a formula to follow.

I just did an interview with a local paper about an art show focusing on zines, and the interviewer kept focusing on the fact that all of the artwork featured was from personal zines. I tried to explain that the beauty of that: it shows people viewing it that anyone can make zines and they can do it about whatever they want. There are certainly a lot of people trying to steal Aaron Cometbus' style and that energy seems like it could be better spent creating your own aesthetics and content. Have you read *Vinyl A Go Go*? That is a music zine that definitely breaks the format and for that reason it serves a much better chance of being distributed by us.

MRR: The publishing aspect of Microcosm started with *Stolen Sharpie Revolution*. Can you tell me more about that? Plans to publish more in the future?

Microcosm: Well, to be completely accurate, there were 11 records put out under Microcosm Publishing before *Stolen Sharpie Revolution*.

MRR: How did you print it? Offset? Did you send it out? Have you thought about investing in a photocopier and printing things that way, or would that be too much work? Since zines often have so many small, personal touches, I was wondering if you are trying to transfer that personality to the books you publish?

Microcosm: Yeah, we print the zines/books that we publish at offset printers in order to be able to have enough copies. The first edition of *Stolen Sharpie Revolution* was printed in town at the same place a lot of the radical newspapers are printed. We've done a few other zines there but now we are starting to do them at United Graphics in Matoon, IL. They have been really pleasant to deal with and aren't freaked out by the content of what we are publishing.

We've had a few opportunities to get a photocopier and print things that way but honestly the cost of maintaining one is astronomical. Maintenance costs about the same as buying a new machine. Offset presses are cheaper to operate and maintain but we just have nowhere to put one at the moment. If another opportunity arises that would probably be the way that we would go. Even when we get zines printed offset we still do quite a bit of stuff by hand. With *Brainscan*, Alex hand-prints the covers and we attach them to the finished zines. With the original *Stolen Sharpie Revolution*, we used to photocopy and fold the inserts and covers by hand. It got to take too much time out of the day and now it's just not possible anymore. Keeping the personality of zines intact when publishing books is a concern as well, though it's hard to tackle. Alex wants to do a *Brainscan* book and is currently investigating ways to create the covers by hand in which it won't be a huge

On Tour with The Cut and Paste Zine Tour

hassle to create and attach thousands of them.

We sold the first printing of *Stolen Sharpie Revolution* in about a year and are doing a second printing as a book that should be out in December. I felt that we had the resources to publish it and it seemed a logical extension of helping the zine community. Publishing more in the future is definitely the direction I want to take now, though it's really financially illogical. A big stumbling block that we run into now is that zinesters can't provide as many copies of their zine as we need from them, so publishing their zines is a good way to solve this problem.

MRR: I know one of the reasons you wanted to publish the *Urban Hermitt* as a book is to reach a non-zine audience. What disparities do you feel exist between the zine and book communities?

Microcosm: Well, that was mostly for Hermitt's sake. I think Hermitt deserves more credit than the zines were providing. Don't get me wrong. I think zines are a totally credible art form but this is the direction that Hermitt wanted to go, and I wholeheartedly supported that. No one else stepped forward to publish the first book so I felt it was a good idea. Hopefully this will inspire other publishers to do books with Hermitt.

There are bookstores that won't deal with zines at all. Everyone knows that. There are literary communities that only view zines and chapbooks as stepping-stones to books. I think people that read books can't always appreciate the aesthetic differences that zines provide, such as artistic layouts, handwritten text, imperfections that reek of personality. This makes it quite easy to marginalize the work of zine makers. Conversely, I think sometimes in the zine community any kind of effort that could be perceived as 'succeeding' or 'selling out' is frowned upon, which sometimes includes publishing a book. I read some speculation about the pricing of Hermitt's book that basically stated that we should price it exactly to cover the cost of printing and mailing.

MRR: Generally speaking, what do you think makes a high-quality zine?

Microcosm: I think letting the personality of the creator shine in its pages through extensive editing really creates a high-quality zine.

MRR: That said, what are some of your favorite zines?

Microcosm: At this point there are hundreds, but if I had to pick a few I'd say ones I read recently, like *Trouble in Mind*, which offers a really good challenge by way of constructive discussion about the future of activism and punk; *Chainbreaker*, a guide and look at history of the bicycle written by a strong woman mechanic; *Clutch*, a daily autobiographical comic written by a librarian; *Avow*, a combination of literature and artwork that really makes the genre shine; *I Hate This Part of Texas*, an honest collection of critical thoughts and theory; and *Doris*, *On Subbing*, a journal from a substitute teacher for kids who can't function in "normal" classrooms; and *Crude Noise*, which is a big dose of inspiration and education that is quite interesting to read.

MRR: You have made some zines yourself, right? Could you talk about them?

Microcosm: Well, most of the zines that I've made are basically about getting drunk with my friends and I feel they are highly irrelevant for the most part, except for the sake of illustrating the concept that anyone can make a zine about anything.

I kinda promised myself that I would stop making zines after I realized this. I no longer have time to get drunk or have friends so my zines would be inevitably boring. I made two zines in the last year under the new title *The Perfect Mix Tape Segue*. They are kinda adult reflection on things that happened to me years ago.

I'm working on a new zine for next year about how my old friends are all having babies now and I don't want to have a baby so I'm getting a vasectomy. I'm going to attempt to relate this to the way my friends and I grew up in homes with lots of physical, emotional, mental, psychological, and alcohol abuse and how they are perpetuating this cycle by having kids.

MRR: In the beginning, did you carry only zines you knew and liked? How has Microcosm grown?

Microcosm: I'd like to say that we still only carry zines that we know and like. In a few instances I've tried carrying zines I didn't like, under the belief that I though they were 'good' and no one bought them. I think they saw through my guise. The biggest change was sometime around 2001, when I wasn't able to physically read all of the zine submissions anymore, so we started to have interns and friends read them. Everyone who works here has input on what is distributed and everyone has the power to order things. That's probably been the biggest change in terms of growth.

The catalog is quite a bit larger and well rounded as a result (I hope). We've hit a lot of growing pains in the last two years and for a long time I tried to do everything myself. It drove me mad and I'm now trying slowly to deal with this kind of growth.

MRR: Could you say what specifically?

Microcosm: Well, it's been everything from just finding an organized system of storing 100 copies of a zine and over a hundred different zines, communication amongst everyone working on a project, zinesters not being able to provide us with as many copies of their zine as we have orders for, becoming legal, doing taxes, having a bank account, finding reliable people to read zines and write reviews of them, finding time to promote ourselves outside of insular circles (part of our mission statement), dealing with delinquent invoices and bounced checks, and keeping to deadlines while only being able to work 16 hours each day or less.

MRR: Portland seems like a big zine town, with the Portland Zine Symposium, the Independent Publishing Resource Center (IPRC; Grieg of Clutch zine works there), Reading Frenzy, etc. How do these various components strengthen Microcosm? Do you feel it is a help because you can get more done? Is it in any way suffocating, where you feel every move you make is being watched and critiqued by the surrounding zine community?

Microcosm: Portland is really supportive. Grieg puts it best when he says that if you announce a project in Portland people will rush to aid you and want to know how they can help. The Zine Symposium is a function that some friends and I put together, when we felt that an event like that should exist in Portland and that we had strong opinions about how it should be done. It, along with the IPRC and Reading Frenzy, serves to help strengthen, promote, and solidify Portland's zine community and to expose new people to Microcosm through cross-promotion with these other organizations. Chloe, owner of Reading Frenzy referred to me as a 'zine magnate' once. I didn't know what that meant, so I had to look it up in the dictionary. Turns out it was a compliment!

It's good that you mentioned this, because I've wanted to open a store for some time but I feel that doing it in Portland is counterpro-

ductive, because there is already so much of that element here and I'd feel like I was just competing with Reading Frenzy, which I don't want to do. I feel it would be a better asset once I live in a different city.

There are often jokes in Portland that every single person makes a zine. While this is, of course, an exaggeration, it's quite a different climate than most other places I've been to.

On the other hand, I do feel that there is a silent group of people who don't necessarily agree with how we do things and would judge myself or us just based on rumors or the small-town gossip mill that exists in Portland. Maybe I'm giving myself too much credit here but I often feel a mild backlash. There's often graffiti on top on stickers I put places, someone put up graffiti once responding to something I'd written in a zine, and I think some people perceive us as some sort of 'cool,' insular social clique sometimes, just due to the nature that a lot of the people we work with are people I know on a personal level. This is awkward and hard to deal with, ya know?

MRR: What would you do differently from Reading Frenzy? Have you been to many zine stores around the US or elsewhere? Which are your favorite and why?

Microcosm: It's not that I would do things differently than Reading Frenzy if I were in charge. I would open a store with what we have now in stock. Our focuses are a little bit different. Reading Frenzy has some plastic toys and stationary while we have political stickers and t-shirts.

I've been to quite a few zine stores around the US and I think my favorites would be Flory Canto in Los Angeles, Breakdown Books in Denver, Spartacus in Vancouver, and Boxcar Books in Bloomington. I like all of them for the same reason: they are comfortable. I would feel welcome sitting there having a conversation. They are more like community centers than places for conducting commerce. I also really enjoy Needles and Pens in San Francisco because everyone is so friendly, though it is really too small to really hang out inside.

MRR: What advice would you give to someone just starting a zine?

Microcosm: Edit, edit, edit. When you think it's done, edit one more time. Think about the content you are putting in your zine. Would it be interesting to you if you didn't know the author? Think about what makes compelling writing to you. What are you sick of?

MRR: Are you able to support yourself with Microcosm?

Microcosm: It's able to support myself and two other people. Granted, I make about $2 an hour and live an extremely minimalist lifestyle, where I ride my bike everywhere and am sustained mostly on community resources and friends, but I don't have to have a job and was able to focus 16 hours of yesterday working as a result. Uggghhhh. It's not glamorous, but it's certainly a lifestyle!

MRR: Can you talk about The Cut and Paste Zine Tour? How did that go?

Microcosm: The Cut and Paste Tour was the second zine tour we did. It was an effort to network with people outside of our 'scene' and to promote zines to a new audience. Due to the introverted nature of zinesters, people that promise to come never show up to our shows, but I feel that it's at worst a good time, and at best a really connecting experience where I get to meet a lot of new people. It was a good age dynamic, with a good ten years between different people on the tour. We had some really great shows and some really terrible ones. We lost a lot of money in the end, but that was sort of okay with everyone.

MRR: What were some of the best shows?

Microcosm: My favorites were easily San Francisco, Denver, and Cleveland. Denver was a really large crowd, where people asked questions and interacted well with us. They also complained that it was too crowded to browse the zines we brought with us. San Francisco was fun because it was outside and there were more people than chairs, which goes to show it was bigger than expected. Dave Roche stole the show that night and when a woman was obviously flirting with him he chose to go get a burrito instead of hanging out with her, that heartbreaker! Cleveland wasn't the biggest audience but everyone was very talkative and more diverse than many of our other shows.

MRR: What was the first zine tour you did?

Microcosm: The first zine tour was called Copy and Destroy and it took place in January of 2003, with Harmony Heartsun (*Cat's Claw Herbal* zine), Shawn Granton (10' Rule Comics), Urban Hermitt (*Flow Chronicles* Book), Alex Wrekk (*Brainscan, Stolen Sharpie Revolution*), and me presenting from my brother's zine, *The CIA Makes Science Fiction Unexciting*. It was about three weeks long with 27 shows or something crazy like that.

MRR: You're currently putting together a documentary video about the zine community—how is that going? Where did the idea for that come from? Who is involved so far? What is it going to be like?

Microcosm: Well, honestly progress for the documentary has far exceeded my expectations already. The core group involved has shown a lot of good ideas and excited energy. I was trying to carve more of a community feel to the project as my understanding of video is kinda limited and I felt a better final project would emerge from more input. The idea came from seeing *Between Resistance and Community*, a documentary about the Long Island punk scene. It talked about how it covered all aspects of the DIY scene, but completely ignored zines, except on the packaging. I talked to the creators about it and they said it was due to lack of footage, but it really motivated me to create my own video.

It's really too early to give a committed list of those involved as the project will develop over the next 10 months, but we've got big plans included a lot of retired zinesters and people who carved out the initial riot grrrl scene. We are really fighting a fear that most of the video will just be interviews and talking sequences and are trying to think of creative ways to solve that problem. The documentary's primary focuses are on zine history, production (printing, distribution, creation), ethics of zine making, zines as a highly accessible medium, and the diversity of zine makers.

MRR: Ethics of zine making? What do you mean by that exactly?

Microcosm: We wanted to focus on the fact that some people feel very strongly about copyright and pricing zines very cheaply, sometimes even losing money over it. It'll go into zine makers with 'credible' publishing deals like writing for magazines or publishing books. A lot of zine makers also participate in a bit of theft and deal with issues like censorship, which we thought would be interesting to talk about. On the other end of the spectrum, some people use zines to illustrate their ethics like bicycle commuting, keeping art cheap, and illustrating their lifestyle, like *Scam* or *Evasion* zines.

MRR: Are you working on any other projects right now?

Microcosm: Yeah, other than the ones that I've already mentioned, I'm also working on doing an *On Subbing* book with Dave Roche, a new issue of *The CIA Makes Science Fiction Unexciting* about chemical/biological weapons and AIDS, a combination book of the *How2* zine and a book on DIY that Tree of Knowledge never published, and more things are surfacing every day. Most importantly though, right now I'm working on redoing my bathroom to fix some deep-seated rot that was in the floors and walls due to improper construction that was done previously. Worst of all right now is dealing with a pretty gross case of slander with another popular punk magazine. I'm also trying to find ways to reduce stress and to go on a nice, month-long getaway vacation.

MRR: Anything else you'd like to add?

Microcosm: A common misconception is that Microcosm is just a web site. We also have a print catalog that comes out every year and attend lots of events, publish zines and books, and pull a bike trailer around Portland loaded up with zines. I think the internet is kinda this strange alternate reality and the only reason that we have a web site is that about six years ago I had a friend who was designing websites and he wanted to make one for Microcosm. As a result we had a string of successive websites and I had to learn how to update them. It should go without saying but any kind of social change will not occur on the internet; you have to participate in reality. Also, a big problem in a small town like Portland is people forget that you have to talk to people directly, not just about them.

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LE SCRAWL

Interview by Greg Heinman

MRR: When did Le Scrawl form?

Mario: Scrawl was formed by Peter (drums) and me (vocals/guitar/bass) in 1990. Initially playing typical Grindcore we eventually blended it with a bunch of different musical styles—not necessarily stuff we're huge fans of, but music that we had been listening to once in a while, like Jazz, Ska, Swing... After putting out four songs on the *I Kill What I Eat* compilation by Ecocentric Records in 1993 we began to do live shows as well. Following the release of a 7" on Psychomania (Sco), and the *Q* mCD on Ecocentric Records in 1995, we recorded a bunch of cover songs by De la soul, The Exploited, Lalo Schifrin, Terrorizer and Chic—released on the *Rotten Fake* mCD also featuring Agathocles and 7 MxOxNx in 1998. Following a few years in hiatus we started to write new stuff in 2000, put out a discography on Life is Abuse (CD) and RSR (vinyl), recorded the current material this spring, and started to play live again as well.

MRR: Why the name change?

Mario: When we formed the band we had no clue that we weren't the only ones who had come up with this name. After putting out our first stuff somebody handed us a tape by the band from the US—yet, since these guys were from a whole different scene and basically unknown in Germany as well, we barely took notice and kept on releasing our stuff. After Ecocentric Records closed down in the late nineties we got in touch with Life Is Abuse and these guys were a bit concerned the name thing could get us into legal trouble—therefore we were looking for a way to solve the problem without changing the name completely. The "le" was the best way we could think of—it's probably not the smartest idea, but we got used to it. On the other hand, our line-up changed in early 2002 anyways so the slightly different name is somehow supposed to mark a new "chapter" as well.

MRR: How would you describe your music?

Mario: Well, the whole thing is based on Grindcore and to some extend Deathmetal, blended with different musical styles, most notably - I guess - Swing, Jazz, Ska, Klezmer, 80sguitar pop, and so on ... In some cases these different influences are mixed into a single song full of harsh breaks, in others it's just one style—such as Bossa Nova - and all that's left of Grindcore is the vocals. We don't really care how it's called—for some it's "Jazzgrind," for others "Loungegrind," "Grindska," etc.

MRR: What are your musical or artistic influences?

Mario: I guess that's probably pretty easy to tell by the stuff we're using in our songs. By the time we started mainly bands like Napalm Death, Extreme Noise Terror, Active Minds, and Terrorizer, etc.—on the other hand we were always into Punk/ Hardcore—as well as into the bands we grew up with as The Smiths and so on. All that Jazz, Swing, Latin, and so on stuff came later on—we've never been really into it though—we listen to it once in while, that's it. We're also not the biggest fans of Ska—but it fits our songs pretty nicely and provides a certain groove—especially when we do live shows.

Peter : We appreciate bands, regardless of their background, that try to push the envelope, that are extreme in terms of speed, technical ability, arrangement, vocal styles, whatever... The combination of high speed and "groove" has always been very appealing to us. Therefore we're huge fans of bands like Lock Up, the early Mighty Mighty Bosstones, and Disharmonic Orchestra.

MRR: Who is in the band currently?

Mario: After changing our line up in 2002 the band currently exists of Peter (drums), Michael (keys), Simon (guitar), and me (formerly on guitar now on bass/ vocals). For the recording sessions we work with guest musicians on trumpet, trombone, accordion, flugelhorn (we have to mention that one), and saxophone; unfortunately we've never been successful in finding someone to actually join the band—there have been quite a few attempts though, and once in a while we got a saxophone player on stage.

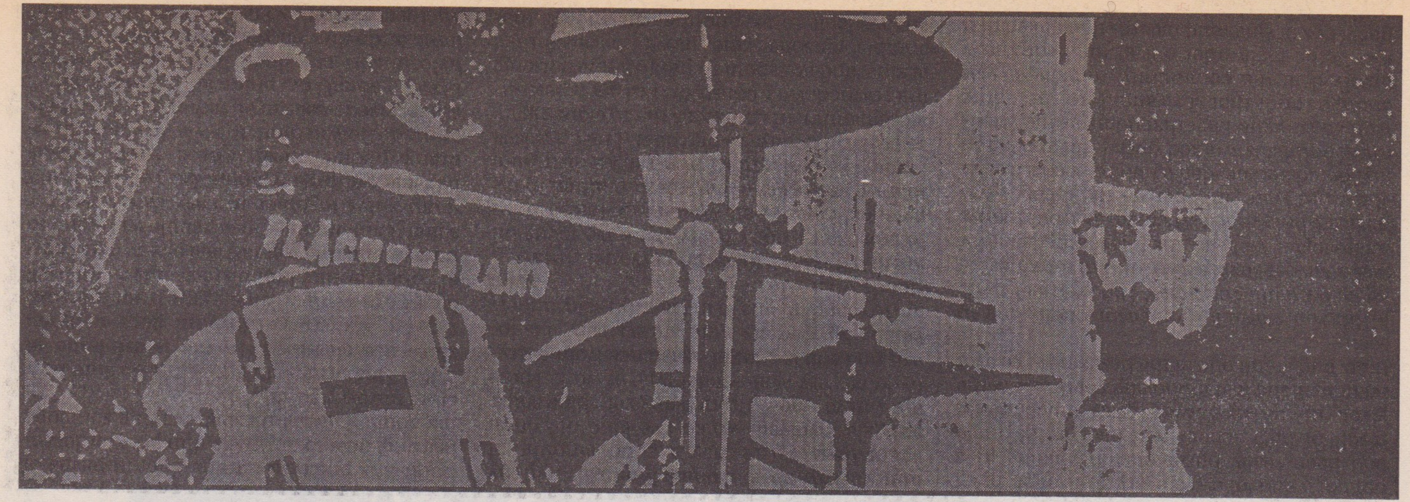
MRR: How is your newer material different?

Mario: The new material is still typical (le) Scrawl stuff—yet we've tried to make the new songs faster and more melodic; there are not that many breaks as before—overall it's more "real" songs with verses and choruses. We've also tried to improve the vocal parts in terms of singing faster and more pronounced, and to pay more attention to the lyrics than on the former releases.

Peter: Overall it's less of a mixture of different musical styles in one song and way more based on bass lines and guitar riffs. Instead of forcing tons of styles into a single song, the entire recording with its different elements is now like one song.

MRR: Who recorded the new demo?

Mario: We've been working for the first time with engineer/ producer Harris Johns—known for his work with bands from the metal circus (Sodom, Kreator, Immolation ...) and punk/HC alike (Slime, Daily Terror, Vorkriegsjugend...). We recorded thirteen songs at his "Spiderhouse" studio in Luette/ Germany—a tiny village in the countryside - in March/ April 2003. The stuff is supposed to be released on CD and 10" vinyl—most likely once again by Life Is Abuse and RSR. Due to Harris' knowl-



edge the entire recording process proofed to be a very refreshing experience, especially when it came to finding the right sounds for drums, bass, and guitars.

MRR: Where have you played live?

Mario: So far we've played gigs in Germany and we've also done a small tour in Slovenia in 1997—including our last gig with the original line-up. After that there has been a pretty long break, and we just recently started to play live shows again.

MRR: How is the scene in Germany?

Mario: It's fairly hard to define "the scene"—in general we got the impression that after a fairly proliferate time during the early nineties, many people got a bit bored by the grind / noise / crust thing. Some of the bands and record labels closed down for good or went into a different musical direction. The entire thing has never been completely dead though. In recent years, things seem to gain some motion again. There're more live shows, some of the "old" bands reappear, and there are new bands as well. The good thing is that there're probably not that many people around anymore who consider this kind of music a novelty act and it also seems to be more accepted by the entire punk community. Lately, we're also pretty often invited by left wing political groups to play shows—something that didn't really happen to Grindcore bands when we started. But that's just our impression—and we might be completely wrong.

MRR: Do you have any plans to tour outside Germany?

Mario: We do in fact have plans to tour abroad. First thing is hopefully going to be a few gigs in the Bay Area and at some other locations in California sometime later this spring of 2004. On the other hand we're planning to play in Europe as well, preferentially short tours spanning 2-four shows.

MRR: How did you meet Seth from Anal Cunt?

Mario: When we released our first songs on the "I kill what I eat" compilation we hadn't played any live gigs, and no one in the "scene" had ever heard of us. After the stuff came out, we got a bunch of letters from people all over the world, wondering what "scrawl" is about and one of these guys was Seth from A.C. We started to send letters and demos back and forth and in 1995 we played shows with these guys when they were on tour with the almighty W.B.I. and Necrophiliacs in Germany. By that time we had been working on our "Q" mCD and asked Seth if he'd like to do guest vocals. He was into the idea and joined us for some opera style escapades.

MRR: What is your ultimate dream for Le Scrawl?

Mario: We've never been thinking about that—when we started to form the band we discussed pretty often how we would ever be able to release our stuff, so by that time it was our "ultimate dream" to convince someone to put it out—after that had been done there were goals like writing songs, that would stand up to our own expectations or playing good shows, stuff like that—but there has never been anything that really could be called the "ultimate dream."

Peter: It would be pretty neat though to play with bands that we've been fans of for a long time, and playing gigs abroad like doing gigs in the US or Japan.

MRR: Who is the dude on the cover of "Too Short..."?

Mario: Wladimir Majakowski (1893—1930) a Russian poet and part of the avant-garde movement at the time.

MRR: Any interest in major labels? Why, or why not?

Mario: We don't care about major labels for a bunch of reasons—firstly this kind of music and the whole business thing simply don't match. Secondly, we don't want to become money an issue—we usually spent way more on the recording than we would ever get back from a record label—but that's still much better than being told what, how and when to record music, or when to go on tour—so there's no interest from our site in major labels whatsoever.

MRR: What is your day job? Is it a "punk" job?

Peter—historian, Michael—surgeon, Simon—rowdy (at the moment), Mario—physician Can it be more punk (or less)?

MRR: What was your favorite concert ever?

Mario: There's a bunch of shows that made an impression (one way or the other) on us: most important to the band was probably the Active Minds concert at the "Fruehlingsfest open air" in Berlin in 1989—the Berlin wall was still up and this was one of the very few chances for us at that time to see stuff like that live on stage. Napalm Death was amazing at the Loft in Berlin in 1991—huge sound (ringing ears for days) and an "all venue mosh pit."

Peter: I've always been pretty impressed by drummers playing ultra fast stuff - especially live without all the technical crap used during recording—so seeing someone like Pete Sandoval has been a major event and eye opening as well (in terms of our own imperfections).

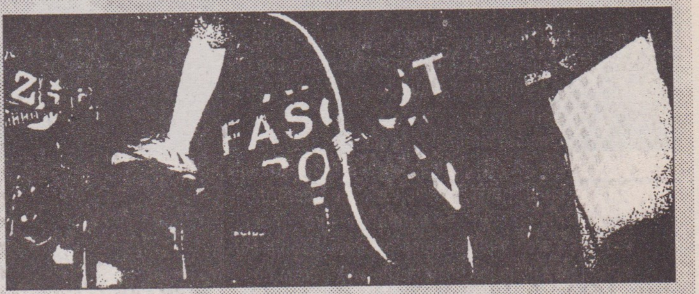
Mario: No doubt about that!

Le Scrawl
c/o M. Anders
Weddingstr. 5
13357Berlin
Germany
www.go.to/scrawl

MIGRA VIOLENTA

EUROPEAN TOUR DIARY 2003

By Daniel Migra Violenta (vocals) and Carolina Migra Violenta (guitar).



We were finally in Europe. After six months and so much work, so many papers and visas, and, of course, so much money, we were *ready* in the old continent, ready to play!

One of the first things that we noticed that was different was the cleanliness. Yes, it is strange but this is the first that we saw of this, all the streets were super clean, all the places were, too. That was the first difference.

At the first show in Germany we were late, 'cause we spent three hours more then what we thought we would getting there, 'cause they lost our bass! We couldn't find it anywhere, and finally it was in a little car with some lost stuff; why was it there? So we got it back and then we ran right away to the train station in Frankfurt. We got to the place almost at midnight; we played our first show of the tour and feasted, with champagne! In a squat!

The next day we woke up in the Metzgerstrasse squat and we really could not believe all the food that was on the table for breakfast. Things that would be really expensive in normal life for a Latin-American guy: different cheeses, mushrooms, tea, coffee, juice of different tastes, different kinds of breads, *everything*—for a breakfast in a squat! Really pretty different.

In Germany, we got to know how different it is there from where we live—economically, of course, culturally, and with the state. Yes, we are talking about the state, the state in Germany—it works, like or not, it works. We live in a continent where the state either just doesn't work or it is against the people, where corruption, combined with repression, results in poverty.

We were in paradise: free food, free drinks every night, shows every day with bands of the same mind as us. Maybe these are normal things in Europe, but for us it was not.

Another thing that got our attention was that after our second show, in Mannheim, we sold like ten t-shirts, ten CDs and seven 10" records! We never sell that much stuff in Latin America.

Those were the first days of our tour, and the reactions were wonderful. We wanted it to never end.

One to our fourth show, this time in Switzerland. We were still in the paradise, in one of the richest countries of the world! In general, the shows were in squats and we loved that! The first show in Switzerland was in Basal in the middle of the city, in a squat with four floors, really good food. It was a show that was not so emotional.

The next day, we went to Geneva and stayed in a Polish people's squat. We mention that they were Polish because there is a lot of prejudice towards them in Europe, people say that they destroy things and make disturbances. Juan got to go to the free doctor who attended to immigrant people and people with problems with drugs 'cause his ear was infected. The medicine was extremely expensive.

That night we played in the Bandito Asso squat. Playing a show alone is a big shit, but it is more shit when the people at the place want you to play all the night long cause you are the only band for that night and they paid for their ticket! Fuck. That squat was a paradise. It had a TV, videos, a microwave, the internet, everything. And everything was recycled out of the trash!

Our last show in Switzerland was awesome. It was in the Kleidelfabrik squat, which has three floors, a concert room, and a skate park. We spent all afternoon in the skate park with the guys of ARSON from Germany. That night was one of our best shows, the volume was higher than I'd ever heard in my life, was so high that it was almost unbearable, but it was excellent.

Then, from Switzerland, we passed into France; we had only two shows there. We played with a HC crust show in Lyon with VOMIT FOR BREAKFAST and DRIE LAGUEN. It was chaos. It was the first show after the holidays and it was awesome, we were with so many friends—Nicolas, COCHE BOMBA, and Esteban. It was excellent how

filled with people the squat was; it was only bad for some guys that were really totally drunk.

Our second show there was in Grenoble, just as cool of a show in just a little bit smaller of a squat. In France, we saw more police in the streets, dirtier streets, and cheaper cars. But the people from there were really nice, except some people didn't like any bands that sang in English.

Our second week, we went to beautiful Italy! We feel like we were home, everybody screamed, there were dirty streets, policeman everywhere. Italian people who were like Latinos. We were really so surprised about how the shows were there. So many people knew the band cause our split 7" with DISARM was put out in Italy. We met more friends there, Borys and Michel. We ate too much spaghetti everyday, but we didn't eat pizza, which is incredible but real.

One of the things that surprised us in the Italian scene was that there were squats in the middle of nowhere. Yes, you'd be in the middle of nothing and then suddenly out of nowhere would come a lot of cars and vans full of punks and crusties. Another thing we noticed while doing four shows in Italy was that after shows they make a big party, where all the punks and the crusty people full of patches start to dance to the hits of the 80s! Really! Until seven in the morning, they were dancing like crazy. It was awesome, the lack of prejudice and the liberty to just have fun that we saw in Italy. When we were in Bologna, people from surrounding cites filled up a squat in the middle of the city.

The road that goes from Undine, Italy, to Austria is one of the most beautiful landscapes that you can ever see in your life. Our first show in Austria was on a Monday at Cafe Sub in Innsbruck and the show—oh surprise—had 80 persons there, but we played alone! Yes, alone, and on a Monday.

The other show in was in a squat in the middle of a mountain with bands like VARUKERS and some incredible others. They made us incredible food that was not too spicy. In Europe, they eat their food so spicy, like they were Mexican. We were in the squat Juz Between with really nice people. They had a computer with access to the internet on stage, so you could check your email between songs. Austria is beautiful; we even found a pile of bicycles thrown in the street.

After Austria, we went to the Czech Republic. For us, this was a dream made real. We had two shows there with lots of people. We went on a little walk through the Prague castle with CONFUCIONE from Italy, whom we played our two shows there with.

The first show was in the Papirna squat. For a Tuesday, it was so good. The next day in Borneo we played with SEE YOU IN HELL. We saw our friend, Filip, who made the invitation letters for us to get our visas for the Czech Republic. It was a hot show with many people in the Yacht club. It was super cool; there were so many distros.

And then back to the Germany. The first day we were at the legendary and famous Zoro Fest in Leipzig. There were all kinds of people and bands from all around the world. Zoro Fest was in a squat with five flours, seven hundred crusties stayed there for the three days of the fest. We played fourth, after VISION OF WAR. The show was super hot, and the pressure was too much for us. We played in the middle of the night, the people were incredible to us, and we gave as much as we could. There were three different rooms of distro, all stuff you'd want, and performances and vegan food. It was an incredible night. OLHO DE GATO went on after us; they are the best band in the world! Live, they explode your head, and on vinyl, it is the same.

The night ended with CONSUME and BORN DEAD from USA. Most of the people there were so drunk that only the half of the people saw them. The week of our highest expectations was ending as one more show ended.

That Sunday we played in Bielefeld in Germany with TRAGEDY and INTENSITY at Ajz, a legalized squat. That means that the squatters talked with the government in order to designate the squat as legal; this takes much time and much help from the state. Ajz was a beautiful place with a gymnasium, carpentry and iron workshops, and a place for shows with an incredible reputation. INTENSITY played second and the people didn't care too much, but I thought that they were awesome, but the people didn't

respond. Then we played, and we played one of the best shows of our lives, but the people gave us nothing. And at the end TRAGEDY, the most popular DIY band of the moment, played, and all the people were screaming and accompanying the songs with their hands and heads. The people from this band were super nice, we wondered if maybe they would be kind of like rock stars, but no way. They were super friendly and they were interested in getting to know about the situation where we were from.

Then, we had another eight unforgettable shows in Germany. We had two shows alone and then some shows with star punk kids, girl star punks, but no time to rest. At this time, we started to feel a little bit tired, playing every day and not having too much rest.

Also, it was so normal there to always have clean paper and liquid soap in the bathrooms in the squats, free drinks and food everyday, some money from the shows, free internet in the squats, and, all the crusties had cell phones. Things that are unexpected in Latin America were normal to see every day.

Next, we went to the land of the crusty, with PROJECT HOPELESS and our friend, Steve, from *Reason To Believe* zine. Steve traveled from the UK to come for that part of the tour with us. Our show in Copenhagen was at the last squat still open there, an incredible place with five flours and a distro shop. That day they cooked for 60 people, all with food from the trash.

After that, we went to our first show in Sweden, in Malmo, where INTENSITY was from. But, that day they had flown to Japan for the tour. Our show was in a Latino club. There was a guy from Chile who was an exile. He was pretty crazy. It was an awesome show full of nice people, and after the show there was a party in a friend's house—the smelly feet party! Their custom is to take off your shoes before you go in the house. Can you imagine all these crusties without shoes on in a small room? That smells really bad!

The next day's show was in the most fascist city in Sweden, and we get know that the morning after the show, when fascist skins manifested in front of the place where the show had been! Violence against the left, at a punk space, by skins—incredible but real! And we were in the middle of that. There was extra security in the show space, people parked their cars far away from the space, and we didn't go outside, in case anything happened.

The last show in Sweden was really good, in PROJECT HOPELESS's hometown. We played with CONSUME and BORN/DEAD for second time, in a squat in Gothenburg city. The bands gave an excellent show.

It was incredible being in all those countries where there were no poor people. Yes, there were people who had more than others did, but the state took care that everybody had the basic things they needed to have a normal life.

We went to Norway next, where it was so cold, just to play two shows. The first one was in Oslo, at the Blitz squat in the middle of the center of the city. It's a really nice place, almost a complete block long. What an incredible place for gigs. When we got there, there were some burritos for us to eat. That was another high intensity show, there were almost 150 people, we played with FUNERAL DINER from USA. We played a really good show together and we had the opportunity to record the show's audio and have it filmed.

We passed on to the Netherlands, where we saw snowfall. It was beautiful. Our first show was not so good. There were not too many people, like 20, at the show. It was organized by our friend, Mark, from the band CATHODE at a squat in Hengelo. Our second show, with JESUS CRUST, had the same number of people. You wouldn't believe it.

Things started to be good in Leiden, the Netherlands. We played at an excessively big club but it was a show with really good bands. We played with MY OWN LIES, BORN DEAD and CONSUME for third time in the tour.

In the Netherlands, consumption of drugs is legal, and you can buy soft drugs in places called "coffee shops." But you don't see kids in bad personal situations with drugs anywhere the scene; it is just a little bit more of a normal thing to people, I think.

Our last show here was in Utrecht, at the Flying Dog squat, a really big place with a skatepartk and a workroom for doing mechanics! That show was almost a festival; there were almost six bands. We went back to Germany for one show in Bochum, with the Argentinean guys in BOOM BOOM KID who we'd never played with before in our country. It was a really nice gig, with many people. It was really cold because it was almost in winter in Europe. Then we cancelled two shows in Belgium; they weren't confirmed, really.

Our last confirmed show of the tour was in Paris, France, in an alternative squat with DROP DEAD, COCHE BOMBA, and VOMIT FOR BREAKFAST. It was one of those shows that we will never forget—there were almost 500 crusties from all of France, because it was DROP DEAD's only show in France. Unlike our show in Germany with TRAGEDY and INTENSITY, where everyone got too wasted to watch all of the bands, at this show all the people were excited to see and enjoy everything. We played after VOMIT FOR BREAKFAST. We weren't the stars of the night, but a lot of people in that place wanted to see us. Later, the COCHE BOMBA guys played all their hits from the 10 years they'd played together.

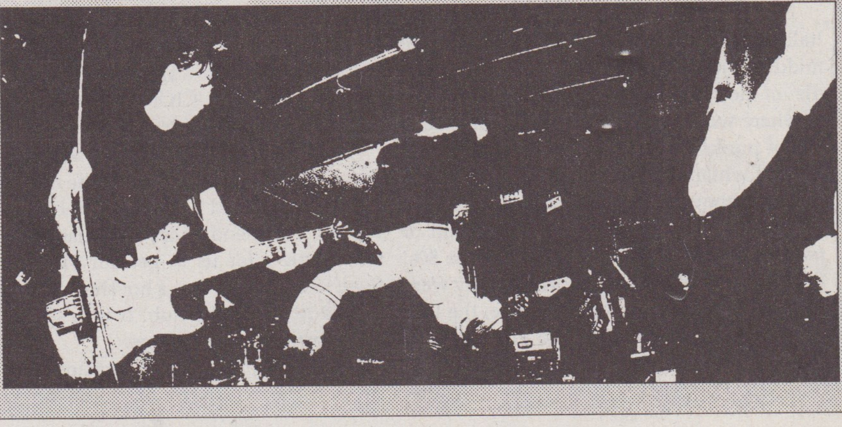
DROP DEAD, as I said, was the true draw, they had a really bad sound that day, but they were demolishers, just like you can imagine. The night ended with many punks from distros selling stuff. The people who were running the place and the people there wouldn't let Drop Dead stop. They said, "This is the last song" and the people said, "More!" They said "Bye!" like three times, it was awesome.

And to see people who are 40 years old in the scene with bands or distros or labels was incredible, cause we are in a scene where there are no people older than 30. In Argentina, they say that punk is a thing for kids! Fuck!

After, we had four free days in Paris where we visited all the necessary places, like the Eiffel tower, etc. We had the opportunity to record for free in a great studio. We got to know all about Paris with our Argentinean friend Aguntina, who lives the Serice squat where we made our farewell with a show only for people that they knew, like 80 people. We played with MOHO from Spain, and the show was full of fury and emotion. There were so many people there that we'd met. So many people to say thanks to and to remember. Not so many people to forget.

We really want to thank Timo; he is the one that made a lot of this possible. It was a tour full of surprises, cultural differences, good and bad shows, and many new friends, but especially we want to keep in mind that in part of the scene there is respect and a less violent style, which is really something to imitate.

When we were coming back home, after we had passed through 11 countries without any problem, we had a big problem in the airport of Argentina with the lady who put the seals on the passports, 'cause there was a "VIP" line and another for "normal people." Argentina—home sweet home.

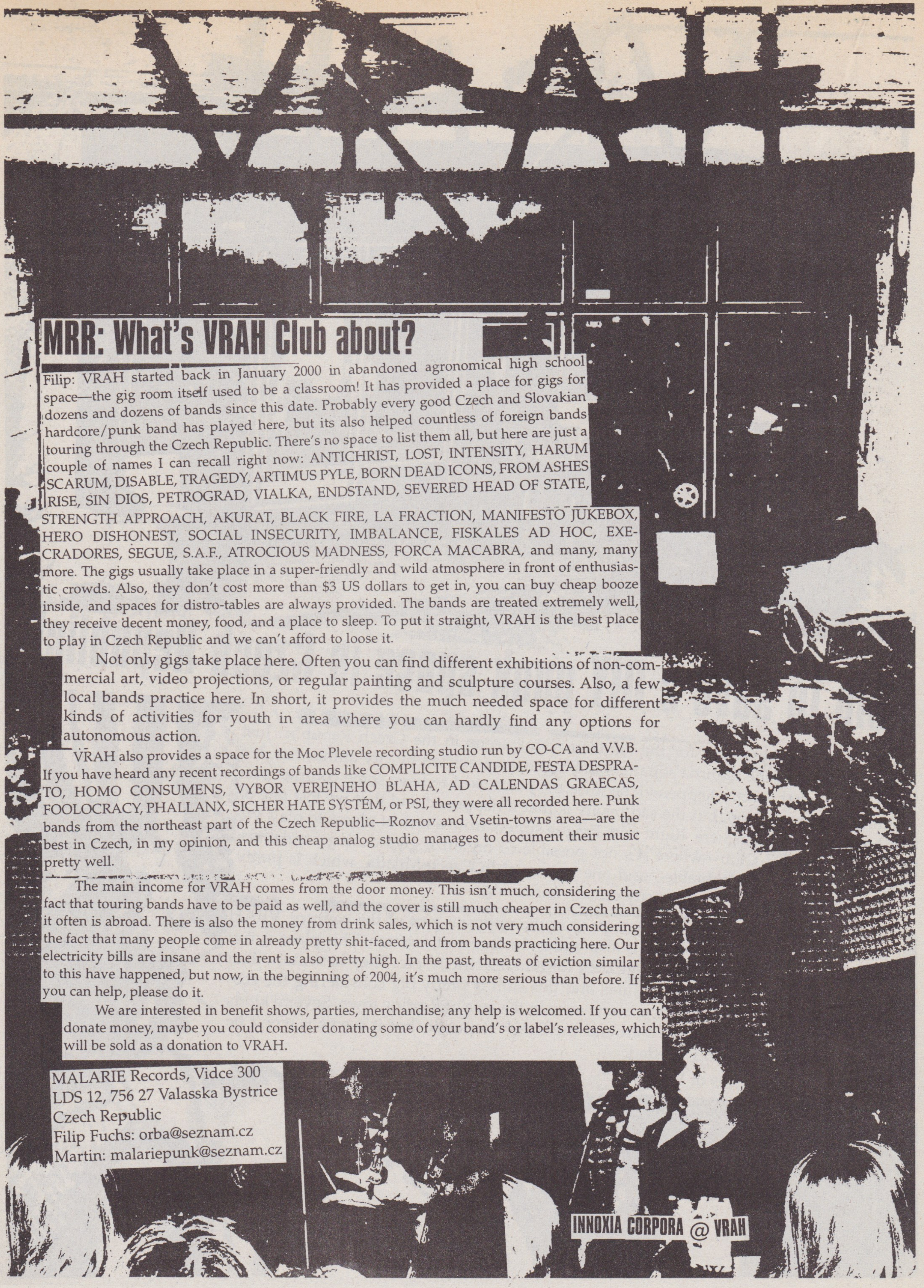


Help to save a DIY punk space in Czech Republic!

2004 didn't start very well for the hardcore/punk scene in the Czech Republic. Just before Christmas, the Papirna squatters in Prague were evicted by city authorities. It's hard to say what exactly happened, because the place used to have some contract preventing it from eviction, but the sad reality is that it happened and that we lost one of the best spaces for gigs here. Right now Prague suffers from a lack of places to play. We have only the 007 Club—where it's not possible to organize gigs during weekends, because they are not profitable—and one last squat in Czech-Milada, which is pretty small and too far away from the city center, remaining.

To add insult to injury, another space in the opposite part of the country, VRAH Club in Roznov pod Radhostem, is also under the threat of eviction. This place is run totally DIY, and is currently in huge debt for rent, electricity, etc. They havemore than $1600 US dollars back debt from June, and this sum is pretty big considering the economic situation in Czech, which is even worse in the area of Roznov town. Several kinds of benefits have been organized around the Czech Republic, but it seems it won't be enough. Your help is badly needed.

Interview with Filip Fuchs of VRAH club.



MRR: What's VRAH Club about?

Filip: VRAH started back in January 2000 in abandoned agronomical high school space—the gig room itself used to be a classroom! It has provided a place for gigs for dozens and dozens of bands since this date. Probably every good Czech and Slovakian hardcore/punk band has played here, but its also helped countless of foreign bands touring through the Czech Republic. There's no space to list them all, but here are just a couple of names I can recall right now: ANTICHRIST, LOST, INTENSITY, HARUM SCARUM, DISABLE, TRAGEDY, ARTIMUS PYLE, BORN DEAD ICONS, FROM ASHES RISE, SIN DIOS, PETROGRAD, VIALKA, ENDSTAND, SEVERED HEAD OF STATE, STRENGTH APPROACH, AKURAT, BLACK FIRE, LA FRACTION, MANIFESTO JUKEBOX, HERO DISHONEST, SOCIAL INSECURITY, IMBALANCE, FISKALES AD HOC, EXECRADORES, SEGUE, S.A.F., ATROCIOUS MADNESS, FORCA MACABRA, and many, many more. The gigs usually take place in a super-friendly and wild atmosphere in front of enthusiastic crowds. Also, they don't cost more than $3 US dollars to get in, you can buy cheap booze inside, and spaces for distro-tables are always provided. The bands are treated extremely well, they receive decent money, food, and a place to sleep. To put it straight, VRAH is the best place to play in Czech Republic and we can't afford to loose it.

Not only gigs take place here. Often you can find different exhibitions of non-commercial art, video projections, or regular painting and sculpture courses. Also, a few local bands practice here. In short, it provides the much needed space for different kinds of activities for youth in area where you can hardly find any options for autonomous action.

VRAH also provides a space for the Moc Plevele recording studio run by CO-CA and V.V.B. If you have heard any recent recordings of bands like COMPLICITE CANDIDE, FESTA DESPRATO, HOMO CONSUMENS, VYBOR VEREJNEHO BLAHA, AD CALENDAS GRAECAS, FOOLOCRACY, PHALLANX, SICHER HATE SYSTÉM, or PSI, they were all recorded here. Punk bands from the northeast part of the Czech Republic—Roznov and Vsetin-towns area—are the best in Czech, in my opinion, and this cheap analog studio manages to document their music pretty well.

The main income for VRAH comes from the door money. This isn't much, considering the fact that touring bands have to be paid as well, and the cover is still much cheaper in Czech than it often is abroad. There is also the money from drink sales, which is not very much considering the fact that many people come in already pretty shit-faced, and from bands practicing here. Our electricity bills are insane and the rent is also pretty high. In the past, threats of eviction similar to this have happened, but now, in the beginning of 2004, it's much more serious than before. If you can help, please do it.

We are interested in benefit shows, parties, merchandise; any help is welcomed. If you can't donate money, maybe you could consider donating some of your band's or label's releases, which will be sold as a donation to VRAH.

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NEUROTIC SWINGERS

Interview by Ulli from the German fanzine, Flyingrevolvelblatt.

If you think about Marseilles in the South of France, you may think of Monte Cristo or the latest flood you think of punk rock. But, as you will realize, it's more than worth to direct your eyes and ears to France where quite a lot is going on in rock 'n' roll. Especially in this city at the Mediterranean coast, a very vigorous scene exists. The Neurotic Swingers are not only a kinda all-star band and a frontrunner of this scene, they're also one of the best punk rock bands anywhere these days. With freshness and creativity, those four guys play a furious kind of punk rock influenced as much by 70s classic heroes as by punk 'n' roll ass kickers of the 90s. Reason enough to introduce you to the band: Raph Swinger (vocals and bass), Pascal Pachuco (guitar), Steph Lollipop (guitar and backup vocals) Sugar Matt (drums).

MRR: You all used to play in different Marseilles-based bands, except for Steph, who runs Lollipop Records. But one night in La Machine à Coudre, Marseilles was burning— please tell the story.

Pascal: We formed in August 2001 at a special party at La Machine à Coudre ("the sewing machine"), our rock' n' roll club, something like the CBGB of Marseilles. It was the record release party of the Marseilles's Burning 7", a compilation of the city's good bands, and we all played with our old groups, GASOLHEADS, DOLLYBIRD and SUGARFIX, and Stephan organized the show. Late that night, we were still partying, totally drunk, and we found out everything was there to form a new band. We practiced two days later, and since then nothing has changed, we still have the original line up.

MRR: That was the beginning of the NEUROTIC SWINGERS. What happened next?

Pascal: We did two split 7" records on Stephan's label, Lollipop Records. One was with a Japanese band called DOGMATIC SALAMANDER and one was with KEVIN K from NYC. Then we put out a 10", What's Your Definition of Underground, on a small French label called Shark Attack, just six months after our first rehearsal. The Japanese record label Myrmecoleo released it on CD.

In April 2002, we played at the Pit's, a famous Belgian club. Kris from D. DERBY saw us; he was selling records after the concert. We talked a little bit, drank a beer, but nothing really happened. Fortunately two weeks later, he sent us an e-mail which said, "You guys played the best concert I have seen this year, if you plan to put something out, I'll see what I'll be able to do." That's how it happened,

NEUROTIC SWINGERS

cool.

MRR: I know the GASOLHEADS passed away. What's up with the other bands you played in? Are the Neurotic Swingers your main project now?

Pascal: None of those bands exist anymore. The Neurotic Swingers are our main project, but Stephan keeps on running his record label, Lollipop.

MRR: How does the band work? Do you write the songs all together?

Pascal: We work in a very simple way: Stephan does everything, and we complain whenever we can. About the food on tour, for instance, or when there's not money enough in the band's bank to buy some drugs. We write the songs one by one. I mean, we have three songwriters and you only can bring your song when it's your turn. That's it, or there'd be chaos.

MRR: On stage, you dress pretty much in the same style. How important is this band image for you?

Pascal: It's necessary, according to me, and it's not a disguise. We all dress this way in our ordinary lives, even if I don't always wear a glam shirt when I go to a bakery.

MRR: This summer you played your first gigs outside of France, right? How were the reactions and what kind of experiences did you have in general?

Pascal: On one hand, I've noticed it's easier to play in northern Europe, and people seem to be more involved and into punk rock. In every city, there's a good record store, a good club, and there are always four or five interesting bands coming from the area.

But in the other hand, people are way hotter in the south. In Italy everybody pogos, I've never seen pogo dancing in Germany or the Netherlands—of course they fucking smoke too much. Anyway, we've always had good responses, and I think there's no use for a band like us to stay in this country. If you don't sell records, at least you can travel, is my opinion.

MRR: How's the situation in France? As I know it's not so easy to get shows. There's not such an evolved scene structure, but the bands used to help each other to book shows in their hometowns.

Pascal: To book an entire week's tour, it's quite impossible, but you can play for long weekends. You can deal with the big press or venues, but you have to take your time, you need to start contacting them six months before, at least. And most of the time they're complete assholes. They're so disconnected, they don't read fanzines, they don't buy new records, and if you don't use a tour manager, they treat you like shit, especially if you're French. I hate them so; they all deserve to die. Or be sent to gulag, two years in a work re-education camp.

I think the main problem in France is that everybody's sucking up to American and Scandinavian bands, and nobody notices the good ones in their hometowns. That's stupid and it often becomes a vicious circle. I don't care about them, I don't need their money, but I just want things to come back to reality. A band is good because it's good, not because it's American and has a huge tour bus. But that's how things are viewed here in France. But, you can always do your fifty good concerts a year in small venues and ignore those assholes. May they continue to suck cocks in hell, I don't need them.

Stephan: But, the good thing that comes from that is that the bands have to do things by themselves. For example, the guys from the JERRY SPIDER GANG book shows in their town, Toulouse, the guys from HOLY CURSE book in Paris, EXXON VALDEZ book shows in Strasbourg, TV MEN book in Rennes, etc. And that's good, because they are used to touring, so they know what bands expect. We do it too, in Marseilles.

MRR: How would you evaluate the status of punk rock in France? Are you and the other bands in your scene a bunch of outsiders, or is it cool to be a punk rocker and all the girls love you?

Pascal: I don't know about other countries, but right now in France we have a "punk rock" fashion craze. I don't mean music or lifestyle, only fashion. You can see some funny scenes, like Los Angeles tough guy wannabes wearing nailbelts and buttons, or young girls walking with creepers and blue hair. Of course, they don't understand anything. I've even seen a shirt in a big supermarket with the anarchy symbol and the Sid Vicious' face on it, and people were buying it, that's unbelievable! But for us it's cool; we can buy cheap punk clothes, and we'll wear them when the fashion is over.

MRR: What does it mean to you to be "underground"? You mentioned this issue in your first record.

Pascal: Yes, we called our first 10" that, and it's the title of a song we still play on stage, "What's Your Definition of Underground?" We try to make things, well, without taking ourselves too seriously.

MRR: To me, your scene seems to be pretty interesting, there're lotsa cool bands. What do you think?

Pascal: There always were good bands in France. From DOGS to TV KILLERS, there is a tradition that is still alive. I think about THE JERRY SPIDER GANG or THE COWBOYS FROM OUTERSPACE, they brought French punk rock to a high level. Look at what I've seen on internet. "Wow. Wow. Wow! Holy hell, what's up with all these great fucking French punk bands? Last week, THE HATEPINKS were kicking my ass. And now the latest from the NEUROTIC SWINGERS is tearing up my stereo and reaffirming my belief in that thing called rock 'n' roll. Good lord, I'm impressed! How do you say 'awesome' in French?" Cool, no? That's from our last review in Now Wave fanzine and it speaks for itself about the French scene.

MRR: In some ways you seem to be pretty close to new American bands like THE BRIEFS, THE DISTRACTION, etc. Do you see yourselves in the same context?

SPEAKER NOT GIVEN: Yeah, many reviewers compare us with bands like THE EXPLODING HEARTS or THE

HIVES when they wanna describe our music. Five years ago, every reviewer cited the NEW BOMB TURKS or the DEVIL DOGS. Maybe they are a little lazy? I think we play different music than those bands, but with the same spirit. We have the same influences, late 70s punk rock bands. You can hear it in their songs and in ours, too.

MRR: Which old bands are your main influences?

SPEAKER NOT GIVEN: The same names always come up: NEW YORK DOLLS, RAMONES, DOGS (French ones), CLASH, BARRACUDAS, T-REX, BOYS, VIBRATORS, THUNDERS, DEAD BOYS, SAINTS, GUN CLUB, STOOGES, DAMNED, RICHARD HELL, JAM, BUZZCOCKS, etc.

MRR: "Should art stay or should art go?" You ask that on the new record. Why did you call it Artrats?

SPEAKER NOT GIVEN: For the meaning and the aesthetic of the word, even if it does not appear that way on the cover.

MRR: What's planned the next time? I hope you didn't put a limit on the life span of the band like the GASOLHEADS did.

Pascal: No, haven't. There are no brothers in the NEUROTIC SWINGERS, so we'll be able to stay together longer than the GASOLHEADS did.

MRR: A real bad situation happened to your label, Lollipop Records. Your distributor went bankrupt. How's that situation now? Have you been able to get the label out of this shit? Do you have your records back?

Stephan: I was touring when I heard about that shit. It was the last day of the European tour and I heard my French distributor was bankrupt. They haven't paid me since November 2002, they owe me so much money and I'll never see it, that's for sure. But the main problem is that they still have my new releases in stock and I can't take them back. For example, I have to press more copies of our CDs, although 400 copies are stuck with the distributor. And I have no money to press them again it's an absurd situation! But, the record label will keep on existing, no doubt about it. The Lollipop bands have helped me out; I've launched a kind of subscription. There will be a benefit concert in December. I'm trying to find money to pay all the invoices, it's definitely a very hard situation.

I alone run this record-label. Nobody from the Neurotic Swingers is involved in it. I don't want to do anything else with these lazy guys!

MRR: Apart from these problems, is your stuff available outside of France?

SPEAKER NOT GIVEN: Myrmecoleo Records put out the album in Japan. I know that Demolition Derby has good distribution, even if we don't exactly know about it. Lollipop is distributed by Road To Ruin, Big Daddy, Interpunk, Underground Medicine (USA), Sonic Rendez-Vous (Be-Ne-Lux), Soundflat, Alien Snatch, Incognito, Greenhell (Germany), Rockin' Bones (Italy), and Bloody Mary (Spain).

SHOULD ART STAY OR

SHOULD ART

ALLEGIANCE

INTERVIEW BY JOHAN VAN MIEGHEM OF *GHETTO ROCK.*

MRR: When did you begin playing together?

Bill: Allegiance was formed in Kyoto, Japan, in September 1996. Our influences are Blitz, The Business, The 4-Skins, The Samples, and Chron Gen, to name a few.

In the summer of 1997, we supported One Way System on their Japan tour together with the Japanese Oi! band The Creed. In autumn of 1997, we recorded the songs "Eight Years" and "Over Now" for our first single on Real Deal Records, but scrapped the single because a plan materialized for us to do a split album with Red Alert and we didn't have enough songs! We recorded seven more songs in the summer of 1998 for the split, but it never happened. After about a year, things still hadn't come together, so we abandoned the idea and signed with GMM Records in late 1999 to release these nine songs as our first album, called *Here Today...*

Unfortunately, because of general lateness and a few problems at GMM, the *Here Today...* album wasn't released until almost three years later. Our actual vinyl debut was the song "Outlaws" on the compilation *Sorted* (Real Deal Records, November 1999), a four-song EP, which included Allegiance, Sandiest, Rust, and Clampdown.

In May 2000, we released the songs "Hero In The Making" and "We Don't Give A Fuck" on the compilation *True As Steel* (Bricks Records), a 12-song CD, which included two songs each by Allegiance, LRF, The Creed, Clampdown, Rust, and Sandiest.

In June 2000, we appeared on the video "Tremor On The Western Front" (Sick Records), which introduces 12 bands in a variety of styles from the Kansai area (Kyoto, Osaka, Shiga, and Kobe) of Japan. The Allegiance song on this is "Die On The New Cross," from the *Here Today...*album.

In November 2000 we released the 11-song album *Heroes In The Making*, which is actually our second album but ended up being released before the first.

In early 2002, we finally scrapped our contract with GMM and took our songs elsewhere. *Here Today...* was finally released by MCR in July 2002. A tour of Japan followed and early 2003 saw the release of the new three-song CD, *King Of The City*, on the band's own label, Panther Records, as well as the band's first overseas release *Whose Border, Whose Fight*, on Belgium's Ghetto Rock, a collection of 15 songs compiled from our Japanese releases.

MRR: What has changed in the band over the years? Where did you get the idea to play this style of music?

Bill: The sound kind of developed on its own, really. As for myself, I'd played bass in two Japanese-style hardcore bands, called Without Warning and Nightmare, before Allegiance. At the time, I wanted to move away from that sound and get back to the style of music I'd listened to before I came to Japan, which was mainly UK punk, Oi!, and hardcore bands of the early 80s. Of course the other members put their two cents in, and this is the sound we came up with. I do think the songs have changed over the years. The earlier stuff had more of a hardcore approach, not really in the songs themselves but in the way the vocals and guitar sounded. We've gradually gotten away from that approach, though not really intentionally, and the songs have more of a punk rock sound now.

MRR: Bill, you're originally from Toronto, Canada. What exactly made you move to Japan and do you intend on staying there forever or not?

Bill: I'm from Toronto, yeah. The other two members are Japanese guys from Kyoto. I first came to Kyoto on an exchange in 1989, which happened to be at the height of what was known as the "Band Boom" in Japan. It was a period of a few years when Japanese young people turned away from the slickly-produced pop on the radio and toward the amateur band scene: rock bands, heavy metal bands, punk bands, any kind of band, really. Every kid you met on the street was in a band, and every weekend they went to clubs to watch bands play. It was also the peak of punk and hardcore in Japan, in terms of popularity at least. Even in a medium-sized city like Kyoto, there were punk gigs all the time that attracted huge crowds, and the bands and audience had this incredible energy that I've never experienced anywhere, before or since. Punk bands were getting signed on to major labels, and music magazines and even totally unrelated magazines were rushing to cover the independent punk scenes all over Japan. A complete media frenzy, as Japanese trends tend to be. Anyway, the pace of it all was too crazy to sustain, and the boom had pretty much run its course by 1991. That's what the song "Nothing Left" on our second album and the Ghetto Rock release is about, actually, the death of the Band Boom in Japan and Kyoto in particular. But I got completely caught up in it at the time, and ended up staying here. As for whether I'll stay in Japan forever, I can't tell you that. My family are in Canada and nothing can take the place of the country you grew up in, but I've also spent somewhere between a third and half of my life in Japan, and that's where my life is now. It would be a hard decision to never go back to Canada, and it would be an equally hard decision to leave Japan for good. I'm pretty much leaving that up to fate and where life takes me.

MRR: How is playing punk rock and life in general in Japan different than in Canada? Describe the scene, places, and people.

Bill: Well, there are two main areas for punk in Japan. One is the Kanto area, which includes Tokyo and Yokohama, and the other is the Kansai area, which includes Osaka, Kyoto, and Kobe. Of course there are smaller scenes all over Japan, but it's the bands from those areas that get most of the attention. At this point, you can't really point to one "Kanto scene" or one "Kansai scene," because both have fractured into a bunch of smaller scenes along geographical, musical, and other lines. Most of the fans have split along the same lines, so it's really detrimental to the punk scene as a whole. I mean, I live in Kyoto, and I'm about an hour's train ride from Osaka, but there are punk bands in Kyoto and Osaka that I've never heard and don't have any contact with. And it's not because we hate each other. It's just that the scenes we play in are so different that it's hard to get to know each other unless you go out of your way to do so. As for Japanese people in general, a big difference from Canada is that most of them don't listen to rock, much less punk. Most of the music on the radio is heavily produced, keyboard-based pop music or teen idol songs that don't really have any musical connection to rock, and that's what most people listen to. Japanese people, even younger ones, always ask me, "What's the difference between punk and heavy metal?" It's getting better recently, but a lot of people still have no idea what punk sounds like. I mean in Canada, it seems like every rock fan or every college student has the requisite punk section in their music collection, and would at least like to think that they know about it. But in Japan, either you listen to punk and nothing else, or you don't listen to it at all. So you're talking about a very small group of people. It always makes me laugh when I meet overseas bands before they come over here, who imagine they're going to play in front of thousands of adoring fans and make a shitload of money. Because, unless you're the Sex Pistols, it's just not going to happen. As for Japanese punks themselves and the music they play, I think the biggest difference is that the lyrical, social, and political components aren't generally what Western people have come to expect from punk. When British punk first came to Japan, the music and fashions made a big impact, but the lyrics weren't in a language most people could understand. When a lot of Japanese people listen to overseas punk, they ignore the lyrics completely and listen to the vocal as if it were just another instrument, or else they try on their own to translate the literal meaning of the lyrics word by word, with mixed results at best. So the thinking or background behind the lyrics usually ends up getting lost. A lot of Japanese punk lyrics tend to be personal or in the everyday slice-of-life mode. Or else they broadly urge people to live in their own way, never give up the fight, or something like that. Sometimes the lyrics seem to be hinting at some bigger issue or problem, but you can't put your finger on exactly what it is. You don't find a lot of bands tackling society at large or referring to specific social issues or incidents. Even when a band seems to be taking a specific stance on some issue in their lyrics, it's often hard to get them to elaborate on their opinions in interviews or in person. The music and attitude may be in-your-face, but there's an element of vagueness there, too, which is also cultural. Here, screaming your views and opinions for everyone to hear, or shooting your mouth off about other people or other bands, are frowned on by pretty much everybody, including most people in the punk scene. And if you think that's not in keeping with the punk spirit, you have to remember that these people are Japanese before they're punks.

MRR: Do you still go back to your home country every now and then and do you notice any changes after a few years of absence?

Bill: I go back once a year to visit my family. But they've moved to an island on the

west coast of Canada, so when I go home I see trees, maybe some deer, and not much else! So I can't really tell you about changes in the Canadian punk scene. As for Canada itself, I do think it's changed a bit. But now when I go back the main city I see is Vancouver, and Toronto and Vancouver were really different to begin with, so it's hard to say anything definite about that either.

MRR: The band is mainly influenced by bands like Blitz, Chron Gen and 4-Skins, pretty much the entire '82 UK punk brigade. Does that mean you don't think much of the Canadian scene and/or are not inspired by it?

Bill: Of course not. The great thing about DOA, The Viletones, and a lot of the old Canadian punk bands is that they sort of took the best elements of British and American punk and made them into a sound that was their own. And that's what we try to do, except with British and Japanese punk rather than British and American. I've never really understood what's so "British" about Allegiance, because if you ignore the English lyrics and singing style for a second you can hear that a lot of those melodies and rhythms come straight from Japanese punk, not British. So even if we don't sound much like Canadian punk bands, I've definitely been influenced by that approach. As for why we don't have a more Canadian sound, you have to remember that I'm not the only person in this band. There are two other members who have just as much say in how the music sounds as I do, and neither of them listens to much Canadian punk. Just because I'm the only one who can answer questions in English doesn't mean that I'm the only one making decisions here.

MRR: Your first album was supposed to come out on GMM Records but never saw the light of day. Why?

Bill: We're not totally clear on what happened at GMM either. Basically we were told for about two years that "The CD will be out next month" and it never was. For part of that time, GMM really was having problems with distributors and finances, and we don't really know whether that was the main factor or if they just lost interest. If the latter were true, it would have saved a lot of time and irritation if they'd just been honest. Instead, we did an interview in a Japanese magazine publicizing the GMM release, only to have a falling-out with the magazine because they ended up looking like idiots, publishing an article on a CD that never came out. Our second album was released before our first. GMM wrote to say they had mysteriously lost the master for the CD, and we had to send them another one. And still nothing happened! Finally we got an email saying, "I understand your frustration and you can take your songs elsewhere if you want, but the CD will be released next month." Well if the CD were really going to be released the next month, why would they be telling us we could release the songs elsewhere? We were under contract and GMM was legally bound to release the songs, so it was obviously just a bullshit attempt to get us to break the contract so they wouldn't have to. At that point, we just said fuck this and took the songs to MCR, who had them out in a couple of months.

MRR: How do you look back on it now? Do you see it as a missed opportunity?

Bill: I don't think anyone who's been through that kind of hassle would see it as a missed opportunity. A waste of time? Yes. A fiasco? Yes. A missed opportunity? No. Now that the album's out and that's all behind us, I can honestly say that the experience taught us a good lesson, because it showed us that Japan is the place we belong and the first place we should be releasing our stuff. It really brought us back to reality.

MRR: The album eventually got released by MCR. How did you hook up with them? The band is also featured on a lot of different comps and now the album on Ghetto Rock; are you happy with the way things are going now, as far as the band is concerned?

Bill: I've known MCR since 1995, when they released the first single by Without Warning, a Japanese-style hardcore band I played bass in. We'd always planned to release our second album, *Heroes in the Making*, from MCR, so when things didn't work out with GMM, it seemed natural to have them release the first one too. I'd say we've been pretty happy with all our Japanese releases, and Ghetto Rock are doing a good job with the European CD. In the past few years, there's been a kind of changing of the guard in the Japanese independent label scene, with newer labels appearing that are doing things, both for better and for worse, in a more efficient and businesslike manner, while the old labels are slipping a little. We're kind of waiting for the dust to settle before we decide where to release from next.

MRR: Only a year or so after the band got together, you toured Japan with One Way System. How did that go? Any amusing stories?

Bill: The tour with One Way System was a lot of fun. We organized that, actually, together with a band called the Creed. I have a lot of respect for One Way System, not just because of their music, but because they made a real effort to get to know the bands they played with here, and they treated us really well when some of us were in England, which isn't always the case. Some bands are friendly and gracious when they're in Japan, but don't want to have anything to do with you if you run into them on their home turf. During that tour, most of the amusement was provided by One Way System's manager at the time, who spent his days trying to rip everybody off, including One Way System, and his nights making a drunken ass of himself. Quite the character. Luckily, I hear he's no longer their manager!

MRR: I guess not that many foreign bands come and play Japan and the kids must be very excited to see their 'heroes,' no?

Bill: Actually, a lot of foreign punk bands have toured here. Up to the mid-90s, only a handful of overseas bands had made it to Japan, and the gigs they played here were almost legendary. But starting around 1996, a lot of bands have been brought over here to tour, and the Holidays in the (Rising) Sun festival was held in Yokohama last year. Today, I wouldn't say it's that hard for foreign bands to come over and tour Japan once. On the other hand, it may be hard for them to come back, and it still isn't really a place that overseas bands can come over and tour every year. The costs involved are too high, and most Japanese promoters aren't interested in financing tours by overseas punk bands. Only a couple of promoters are willing to do that, and it's only a handful of bands they're interested in. Most of the time, it's the Japanese bands themselves that pay for their heroes to come over here out of their own pockets, and they almost always end up losing money. Of course, the Japanese fans are really excited when their favorite bands make it over. Someone always comes up to the members and says, "I've waited 15 years for this moment," and they really mean that from the heart. Things don't always go so smoothly behind the scenes, but most of the problems are misunderstandings caused by the language barrier or the fact that things are done differently here. Or when a foreign band can't get it through their heads that it's the band members, not some promoter, who are financing the tour with limited funds, and make unreasonable demands or behave badly. The only real disasters have happened when the bands bring over some hotshot manager or promoter whose attitude is, "I've done things this way all over Europe and America, and this is the way things are going to be done over here as well." Because I've got news for you, Japan isn't a Western country. 'Your way' isn't going to work, and you'll end up pissing everybody off in the process.

MRR: Traditional values, family life, etc., still seem very important in Japan. Is that something you can easily live with?

Bill: In North America, at least, when you use the terms 'traditional values' or 'family values,' it implies a very moralistic, probably religiously based way of thinking. In that sense, Japan isn't a moralistic society. Japanese people don't preach about morals, or religion, or politics, or much of anything, for that matter. In that way, it's a very non-aggressive, non-invasive society, and I like that aspect of it. On the other hand, Japanese people have a highly developed sense of duty, obligation, family loyalty, and other concepts that may seem traditional or old-fashioned to Westerners. But it really isn't fair to compare on those terms. If you visit other East Asian countries, where the same concepts exist in much more traditional and rigid forms, you can see that Japan isn't an old-fashioned society at all, in its own cultural context. As for myself, I have mixed feelings about human interaction here. Japanese people's identities are usually caught up in the peer groups they belong to: their family, their company, their band, their neighborhood, whatever. Within those groups, everyone has their role, and everyone behaves more or less accordingly, often even if it's at odds with their true feelings. There are a lot of pressures in the forms of duty, obligation and responsibility, but there's also a very comforting, close-knit aspect and a genuine feeling that you can always depend on each other. At its best, it gives you a wonderful sense of belonging, but at its worst it can be horribly suffocating.

MRR: Have you never considered of singing in Japanese or is the language a problem for you?

Bill: I do translation work and sometimes interpret for bands when they come over here, so the language isn't a problem at all. When Allegiance started, singing in English seemed like an easy decision because it's obviously easier to put feeling into the lyrics and vocals in your native language than in a second one, and a lot of the Japanese bands sing in English anyway. But when you think about the fact that 99% of the people buying the CDs and coming to the gigs are Japanese, and that the lyrics would make a much more direct impact if they were sung in a language the audience could readily understand, then you realize it isn't an easy decision at all. Except for "Heroes in the Making," where there wasn't enough space, we put Japanese translations of the lyrics on all our Japanese releases, and I spend a lot of time on them so that they can stand on their own, rather than read like direct translations of the English. The title of our next release will probably be in Japanese. And on stage and in interviews, I always try to explain about the lyrics. Still, it's not as direct as singing in Japanese, obviously. Recently, I've been thinking about writing a song in Japanese. Someday, maybe an album. But I can't see changing all the songs to Japanese, because at this point the English lyrics have become a part of the sound and a lot of our fans over here wouldn't be happy if we changed that.

MRR: Are you never considered to be an outsider by the locals?

Bill: As for whether I'm considered an outsider, I have to go back to your last question, where I said that Japanese people's existence basically hinges on the peer groups they belong to. And in the peer groups I belong to?my band, the punk scene, where I work, my circle of friends?I'm treated just like everybody else and feel completely accepted. Beyond those groups, and in the greater framework of Japanese society, I'll always be an outsider. But that isn't always a bad thing, because it means that I'm free of a lot of the societal expectations and pressure to conform that Japanese people have to contend with.

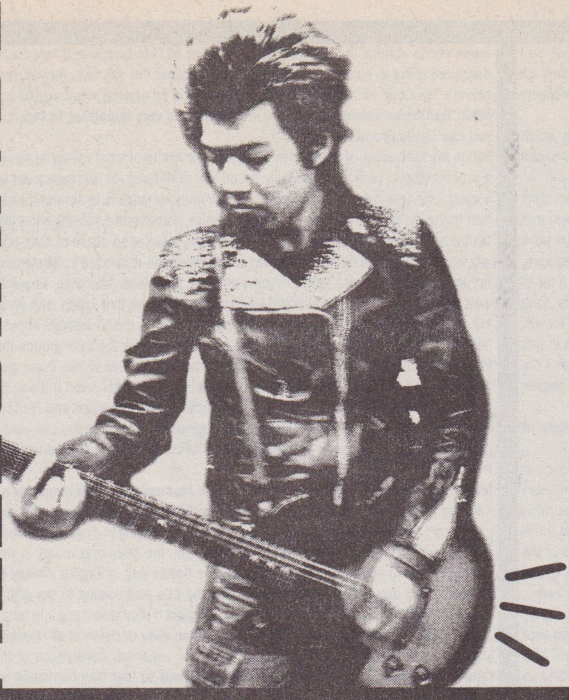
MRR: There seems to be a quite strong nationalist/RAC Skinhead/Oi! scene in Japan as well, which is a bit insane considering they're not even white. Do you see any similarities with the European or American white power movement? By the way, did you know there's an American right-wing band called The Allegiance?

Bill: It seems that whenever I do an interview with an overseas fanzine, I'm asked to give insight into Japanese nationalist skinhead bands, and I always wonder why because a) none of us are skinheads and b) since I'm not Japanese, I'm hardly the first one that extreme nationalists would be approaching to discuss their views with! I will say that World War II and the American occupation left a lot of Japanese people with an almost superstitious fear of nationalism, so that a lot of things that would be viewed as acceptable or even desirable acts of patriotism in the West are seen as nationalist here. I mean, the government didn't even make the Japanese flag and national anthem official until a couple of years ago. Even now, if someone flew a Japanese flag in their yard, they would instantly be viewed as a nationalist and some people would even feel threatened by it. As for the national anthem, a lot of Japanese people refuse to sing it because the words vaguely refer to the emperor. Japan still operates under a constitution written by the American occupying forces. It doesn't allow Japan to have a real army, just a self-defense force, and let's face it, Japan isn't in the most politically stable area of the world. No flag, no national anthem, no army, a constitution imposed from outside... I mean seriously, do you think any Western country would tolerate that situation today? I've talked to members of some of the bands you may or may not be referring to, and came away with the impression that they were more patriotic than nationalist. Or nationalist on an emotional level, rather than the organized political level you find in Europe or North America. Most of them are also aware of the contradictions you mention and have their own rationale for what they're doing. But we've never had any contact with a lot of those bands. In the end all I can say is, why don't you ask them? I can't act as a spokesman for other people's views, much less the views of Japanese nationalists when I'm not even Japanese. Yes, I know there's an American Allegiance; there's also a Swedish metal band named Allegiance, and Microsoft has designed an online space combat game called Allegiance. Could you ask us about ourselves, please?

MRR: In "Outlaws" and "Eight Years" you react against sell-out bands and kids who just think the punk uniform is cool. Now this is an image we have of the Japanese scene, fashion kids in it for a year or two, or is that a false image?

Bill: That's not what "Eight Years" is about at all. It's about the first friend in a punk band I made in Kyoto. I went to see this big punk gig in the summer of 1990, and at that time you just didn't see foreigners at that kind of event, and everyone was looking at me like "Who the fuck are you?" Then this one guy came up to me and said, "Do you speak Japanese? What bands do you like?" and that kind of thing, and when I said I liked the Cockney Rejects he said "Take a look at this, then," and showed me a Rejects tattoo on his arm. Anyway, we became friends after that, and he kind of took me under his wing, showing me the ropes, introducing me to people in other bands, stuff like that. After a couple of months I went home to Canada to get things sorted so I could live in Japan, and

ALLEGIANCE



ALLEGIANCE ALLEGIANCE ALLEGIANCE

when I got back, everyone was talking about how his band had signed a contract with a major label and what a sellout he was for it. Anyway, I never really saw him after that, and after a few years strange rumors started to reach me about how he'd gotten mixed up in some trouble and the police were getting involved. There were so many rumors in those days that you never knew what to believe, and I figured that whatever it was he'd work it out and we'd meet up sooner or later. Then right when Without Warning were about to release our first single, I got the news that he'd jumped off a train platform and killed himself. It was a big deal, of course, and exactly the same people who'd been calling him a sellout a few years before were suddenly telling anyone who'd listen about how much they'd loved him and how wonderful he'd been. I hate those sort of cults that spring up when someone dies young or unnaturally, because they're more ghoulish than anything else, and what benefit do they serve to the person who died? So I wrote that song to say, "I don't know if you were a sellout or not, and I don't care. I don't know what happened or why you killed yourself, and I don't care. All I know is that you were my friend and always will be." "Outlaws" came about when we played a gig after an interval of a few months, and were floored by the fact that the audience was dressed completely differently from before. Suddenly, everyone was wearing a shirt that was either Lonsdale, Fred Perry, or said West Ham. And I knew about half of the faces there, and was sure that they hadn't looked like that a few months ago. They didn't look like that a year later, either, but that's another story. Anyway, it was almost surreal, so after the gig I went back and wrote that song. I stand by those lyrics because they were right for the time, but I try not to write that type of song anymore. I've gotten to the point where I feel that the punk scene is small enough and has enough problems without everyone constantly on the lookout for poseurs and sellouts. If that's what some people want to do, so be it. As for your image of the Japanese scene, I really don't know where that comes from, since very few Westerners ever make it over here to see the scene with their own eyes. There are so many songs about poseurs and fashion punks in every country that I really don't think that Japan is any better or worse than anywhere else.

MRR: Is "Die On The New Cross" against all those old bands that got back together to cash in and new bands not getting a fair chance? Any particular bands you had in mind when writing that song?

Bill: Not exactly. That song was about going to London for the first time and being disillusioned by the punk shops selling overpriced crap, and people who have this big superiority complex because punk started there, but don't seem to notice or care about how stagnant the scene there's become. The title comes from a gig I went to see in New Cross, where a couple of old bands were playing with some younger ones. Everyone who had really come for the music or looked like they belonged there were from Germany or Italy. The British people were a good ten years older at least, and they would move *en masse* to the stage when an old band came on, then *en masse* to the bar to get drunk when a young band came on. It was almost automatic, a young band comes on stage and this horde of drunken middle-aged people exits the room. Really pathetic. I'm not saying that everyone in London is like that, and that was a good six or seven years ago, so things could be different now. But anyway, that's what I experienced and that's what the song's about. It's not really about the bands themselves. Every time a British band comes to Japan, they feel it necessary to inform everyone that they haven't reformed for the money, and to supply a list of all the bands that have. It's become such a cliché that I wish they wouldn't say anything. Frankly, it doesn't bother me if they're making money or not. If it's a good band, why shouldn't they make money? But what I'm saying in "Die on the New Cross" is, just because the British punk scene was great 20 or 25 years ago doesn't mean it's great now. Just because a band was great 20 or 25 years ago doesn't mean they're still great now. Sometimes you have to make a break with the past.

MRR: Are there any personal or other experiences that led to the writing of "Hero In The Making?"

Bill: I got the idea for that song after talking to some American servicemen in Okinawa, which is full of US bases, and in Hiroshima, because there's a military base not too far from there and they all come to the city when they're off duty. They just come up to you, and if they find out you're North American they'll talk your ear off. I mean, until the war in Iraq, they basically thought that Canada and the US were the same country! Anyway, I had longish conversations with some of them, and while a few of them were complete assholes I have to be fair and say that some of them were decent kids. What bothered me was that they had this incredibly distorted and simplified image of the world that was outdated by 50 years at least, and this weird, grandiose concept of their country's role, and their own role, in that world. And at the same time you felt this innocence, that they were really just kids who would rather be chasing pussy than doing combat training, that they were lost in a place that they really didn't belong in, and that in the end all they really wanted to do was be someone. There was a lack of reality that was touching in a way, but kind of repulsive in another, especially when you think about the harsh realities that some of those kids are facing now. So I wrote that song. The funny thing about it now is the lyrics "Give me Iraq, give me Afghanistan," because that song was written in 1998 and look at what's happened since! Not that it was too hard to see it coming.

MRR: Do you have any goals that you want to achieve in this band or in general?

Bill: Basically to keep on doing what we're doing now, only do it better. I still don't think we've reached our peak musically, either live or in our recordings. And I don't think we've reached our peak in terms of the number of people we can reach with our songs.

MRR: What can we expect from Allegiance in the coming months and years?

Bill: Well, recently we've been making an effort to distance ourselves from the 'UK-style' label. That may sound like a strange thing to say, since there's obviously a strong British influence in our music, but I'm not talking about the music, actually. The 'UK-style' label I'm talking about has come to refer to a number of Japanese bands who insist not only in singing in English but in speaking English on stage when no one in the audience can understand it, in bringing in the Union Jack and other British symbols for no good reason, and romanticizing British culture at the expense of their own. And we often end up getting lumped in with those bands just because there's a UK influence in our songs. I'm sure you'd love me to name names but I'm not going to, I'm just going to say that I wish those people would take more pride in their own country and language, and that that's definitely not what Allegiance has ever stood for. Anyway, we slammed those bands last December on the title track of our *King of the City* single, which we kept off the Ghetto Rock release to appease our Japanese distributor, and it took a lot of people off guard. That's exactly what we wanted, of course, but I do think that a lot of people who listened to that song and read our Japanese interview about it are thinking, "OK, you don't stand for that. So what do you stand for?" That's a question we need to address, I think, both in our songs and in the way the band is run, and we're writing a bunch of new material now. Basically, I think the sound is our own and I don't like to categorize it, but if I had to, I'd say the sound is more Japanese than before, and the lyrics are more personal than before. In some ways, it's much closer to the main current of Japanese punk than anything we've done before, only it's sung in English. If I had to guess, I think a lot of Japanese people are going to like it, and a lot of overseas fanzines are going to say, "What the fuck happened?!" We'll see when it's released.

MRR: Any final words?

Bill: Thanks for a great interview! Lastly, here's a list of other punk bands active in Kyoto City now. A lot of them don't sound anything like us, but if anyone out there's interested in Japanese punk, track down their releases and give them a listen! So here goes: 6L6, Denchigire, Family, High Risk, KiM, Midnight Resurrector, Nailclippers, One River, Outnauts, Painted Imagination, Radiates, Radio Shanghai, The Scene, Sensitive Lips, Teenage Lust, Toast, Warhead, and Zero Numbers. Cheers!!!

Check out the band's newest release "Whose Border, Whose Fight" containing the best tracks from their two studio albums released so far plus two new, previously unreleased songs. 15 classic anthems of great venomous, in-your-face streetpunk with tons of 80s U.K. punk & Oi! flavor out now on Ghetto Rock.

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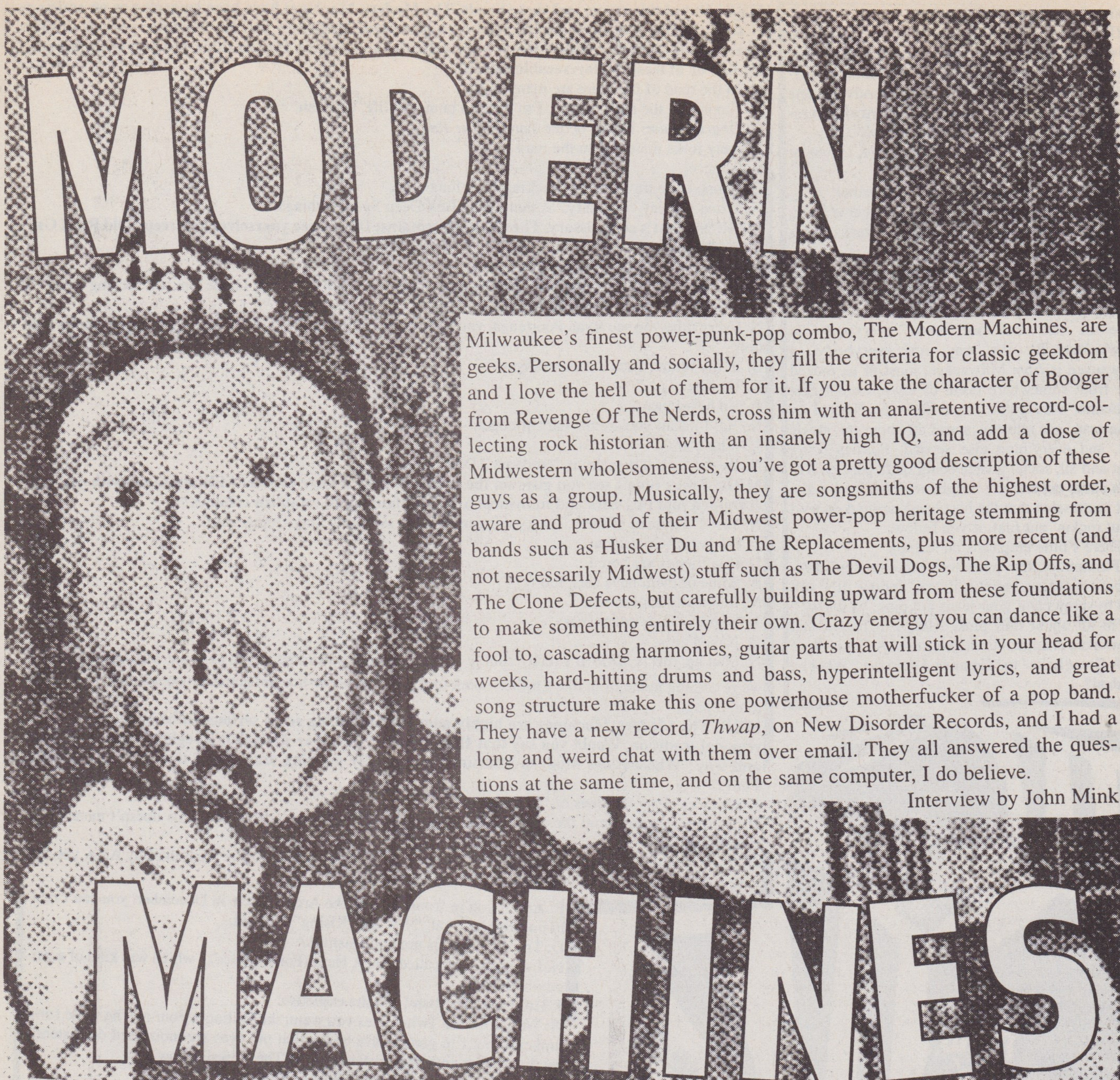

MODERN MACHINES

Milwaukee's finest power-punk-pop combo, The Modern Machines, are geeks. Personally and socially, they fill the criteria for classic geekdom and I love the hell out of them for it. If you take the character of Booger from Revenge Of The Nerds, cross him with an anal-retentive record-collecting rock historian with an insanely high IQ, and add a dose of Midwestern wholesomeness, you've got a pretty good description of these guys as a group. Musically, they are songsmiths of the highest order, aware and proud of their Midwest power-pop heritage stemming from bands such as Husker Du and The Replacements, plus more recent (and not necessarily Midwest) stuff such as The Devil Dogs, The Rip Offs, and The Clone Defects, but carefully building upward from these foundations to make something entirely their own. Crazy energy you can dance like a fool to, cascading harmonies, guitar parts that will stick in your head for weeks, hard-hitting drums and bass, hyperintelligent lyrics, and great song structure make this one powerhouse motherfucker of a pop band. They have a new record, *Thwap*, on New Disorder Records, and I had a long and weird chat with them over email. They all answered the questions at the same time, and on the same computer, I do believe.

Interview by John Mink

MRR: Names, positions, current favorite records, and other bands (current and past) of each member, please.

N: Nato, against free trade without fair global labor standards or possibly doggystyle, and records don't matter, and I've been in several other bands all of which released 7"s on Rip Off, such as the Shrubbers, Runesword!, Coinship, and, most recently, the Silver Suns.

J: Jon Hands-on, Supine (to which I am prone), and Incredible Shrinking Dickies and Rappin, Rodney oft grace my ears. Rawhide Boys Ranch, Sludgy McStonerpants and the Bongriders, and possibly the Extra Chromosomes are bands I are/were in. No, that's not right. Fury of a Thousand Zeuses and Runesword!, also.

D: I'm Dan, I play bass and am the most knowledgeable person in the band about fixing cars, which is both scary and cool. Right now I'm all about *End of the World News*, Onion Flavored Rings, Marked Men. At work today…I'm a dishwasher?we were totally rocking out to *Anthem For a New Tomorrow* by Screeching Weasel. I was in the Shrubbers and Seldon Crisis and am currently in Fury of a Thousand Zeuses and the Fun Time Guys. There's a bunch of other bands I was in, too, like Handsome Hober Mallow and the Free Traders. We only had one show and it was at a Masonic Temple. And the Unstoppable Tacos.

B: I'm Ben. I'm only allowed the Lord's position, or the missionary, and only for the purposes of reproduction. I was in two metal bands, Shock Therapy and Waiting for Dawn. I was also in the Shrubbers. Auditioned for Skrewdriver, but I didn't make it cause they said I was a "total reactionary." Am currently in Runesword!, D&DHC. I accuse Hands-on of being in the Shrubbers. Current favorite record is The Figgs, *Lo-Fi at Society High*. Ungh!

D: Oh yeah, Nate, Hanson, and I were all in the Blue Balls but not at the same time. Hanson, aren't you in Dingleberry Finn?

J: No. I am Dingleberry Finn, sir.

N: We're listening to *Tchaikovsky's Greatest Hits*, there's a record. Oh, I was in Scared of Chaka for a live performance of "Self-Destructo Bust" by Turbonegro.

J: And I turned down a drummership for Boris the Sprinkler.

B: We were all in a Turbonegro tribute band called Turbodingus, except for Dan.

D: I went to see the Bananas.

MRR: No, no, what position in the *band*, ya nitwits: instrumentation and all that.

N: So, what you're saying is, what's Dan's favorite sexual position?

D: You should say what you play, Nate.

N: Isn't anyone else going to?

All: [uncomfortable silence].

N: I play guitar, guitar, and drums. And I sing lead vocals on many songs and backups in the studio. And I play a lot of useless crap. Next question!

B: I play chess.

J: I used to play drums. I still do, but I used to, too.

B: So we've got a guitarist, a drummer, and a

bassist. I wonder what I play?

MRR: Okay, we're gonna have to start with Milwaukee. What's going on there? How can you have such a concentration of amazing, like-minded (yet not like-sounding) bands in one town? Is it the water? Is it the historical succession of socialist mayors? I must know!

N: Tulsa, Oklahoma also had a socialist mayor or two.

D: I say it's the cheap rent and cold weather.

J: I don't know. The last thing I remember is being on a brewery tour and I woke up six weeks, no, a fortnight later.

N: One thing which I do believe is that, as the result of the old and probably mostly non-existent at this point Green Bay punk rock scene in which we all more or less cut our teeth, everybody in Milwaukee. By the way, not everybody in Milwaukee is *from* Milwaukee, most of us moved here from somewhere north of town, except Eric Lastname, who came from Elgin or Normal or some crap, got into this scene all about the music first, and everything else second. Politics being great and all, social justice being quite peachy, I've gotta come out and say it right now that I get a distinct impression that the best bands around do tend to put rockin' out first, if you follow.

D: There's little emphasis on fashion.

N: Fashion of the punk-rock-pictorial-spread-in-*Forbes*-magazine variety, if you follow. It's still cool to spray paint your jeans hot pink, ya know.

J: I'm all about dull pink. Also, I'm pissed that Milwaukee changed its slogan from "A Great Place On A Great Lake" to "Genuine American." What be the deal?

MRR: Out of this scene, and these bands, The Modern Machines have been emerging as an emissary of sorts, taking yourselves on the road with increasing frequency and for lengthier periods of time. There seems to be that "lifer" feel to your activities and output. Do you think you maybe on the road for life, or at least the foreseeable future?

J: On the road of life there are many forks.

N: I'm not on the road for life, I'm dharma bums for life, boo-yah.

D: *Dharma Bums* is way better than *On The Road.*

J: Many forks there are on the road of life.

B: [silence].

D: I hope to be traveling and rocking for a long time.

N: When you say "emissary," is that a Star Trek Deep Space 9 thing?

MRR: No, that's commissary. The question remains: Do you see yourselves as Creepy Old Rock Guys in the future?

J: I see us as creepy young rock guys now.

D: Whenever I see rockers that are clearly over 30, I always tell them that I hope I'm still rocking when I'm their age. And I think I will be.

N: Every time you see Ryan Poortenga, you'd better tell him that. And if you don't, I'm suing you for sedition.

B: In my future, I see a dark stranger.

N: Hanson?

J: You heard me.

N: No, I meant you are the dark stranger.

J: Ahhh-sooo!

N: By the way, it actually is "emissary." DS9, glavin.

MRR: Every time I see you guys on the road you have a *huge* crew of Milwaukeeans with you often crammed into tiny cars and minivans. Are you planning to establish colonies?

N: Yes!!! Thirteen of them. Lucky thirteen. I'm the syphilitic king Georgenate!

J: The herpetic president.

D: Our friends are bored.

B: Some of them have cars, too.

N: It is really cool to see.

J: People in their underwear.

D: Naked girls!

N: Shut up, this is *MRR!* It's really cool to see all our friends in some weird, as in not Milwaukee, place, as we're coming home from like a billion-week tour. Not that we're not just gonna go on *another* billion-week tour, though.

MRR: The Modern Machines are highly adept at producing some serious anthemage, and in a fine regional tradition. Would you say that Hüsker Dü's "New Day Rising" is a regional anthem of sorts, and why? Who besides Modern Machines is currently penning anthems of the Midwest? Dillinger Four?

J: It's more along the lines of "My Ding-a-ling."

N: But that's barely from the Midwest! Just because Chuck Berry is from St. Louis doesn't mean he still lives there.

D: Yes, I do think "New Day Rising" is a regional anthem of sorts. If you're from the Bay Area, you can't really fully understand what "Celebrated Summer" is about.

B: And if you're from north of the Arctic Circle in December, you can't really understand what "New Day Rising" is about.

D: The Apologetics are anthemsmiths.

N: I wrote a song called "Be A Hero (For America)," which was kind of a parody-anthem.

J: Holy shit! The band and the expletive.

N: Well if it's the Twin Cities you want, the Dillinger Four maybe write some anthems, but I'm gonna have to say that my eyes are moistened consistently by the stirring anthemic justice rock of The Hawaii Show.

MRR: What about the Felix Havoc factor?

N: Never heard of them. Is that Dr. Frank's new band?

J: I read that comic.

D: He writes good columns.

B: He's armed to the teeth!

MRR: Where do you record, and with whom?

D: Ben usually records us.

B: In his basement.

N: Nate used to live in Ben's house. Ditching the third person, thank god, I should mention we all once lived at a happy gingerbread home on Pierce Street known as the Crossover House, though not all at the same time.

B: I'm offended that you didn't capitalize "God."

D: The Crossover House is one aspect of punk culture that could never be sold on MTV. The paint was peeling off the wall.

N: And molding, and fungusing.

J: Speaking of fungus, how 'bout that mushroom growing on the bathroom floor?

D: The paint was peeling off one part of the wall in the shape of Africa, complete with Madagascar.

N: I drew the pyramids, and Bono, and Sun City on the map.

J: Bo knows pyramids. No, Bo knows mummies!

N: Steve Funyuns knows mummies.

B: This is ridiculous.

N: We recorded *Thwap!* at Simple Studios in Green Bay, with Justin

"Knobby" Perkins. There's your answer. Happy?
J: Justin has a disease named after him: Perkinson's!
B: It makes you drink Miller High Life.
J: You mean, makes you drink TWIFTA or TWIFCA: That's What I'm Fucking Complaining About.
MRR: Was that house "crossover," in the DRI sense?
N: Yes, absolutely that inspired the name, actually.
D: Nate was punk, Ben was metal. There ya go.
N: This was, what, 1986? When did that album come out?
J: Three months before you will.
N: Massachussetts wants me to settle down, but I will never!
MRR: Is a bar ever a basement, or vice versa?
N: Well! You're asking the right guy. I've got an illegal speakeasy operating out of, um, never mind. *But if there was*, it would be called Loose Stools, and we'd mainly serve Blatz.
J: Boot challenge, anyone? And you should say "swigs out of a jug of wine" instead of Blatz.
N: But that would be a falsitude.
B: I would serve spirits, and cocktails.
J: In Soviet Russia, spirits serve you!
D: I've got a good Yakov Smirnov. In Soviet Russia, punk show cancels you!
MRR: Falsity, not falsitude!
N: This is so fucked up, I can't even begin to explain. A truthitude do I speak.
MRR: What's the best basement in the world?
N: Does it have to exist right now?
J: I think it might. That's why this question is so hard.
B: Modern Machines poll: if time did not matter, what would it be?
All: Endless Nameless.
N: Right now, it's probably Tom Foote's basement in Chattanooga.
MRR: What the hell happened with the Endless Nameless basement and the FBI?
D: Well, Annihilation Time was supposed to play there on 9/11 and some fliers were made that could be seen as 'threatening.' We don't know who called the authorities...we think it was Kinko's...but cops and building inspectors showed up at the house and let themselves in.
J: Due to the absence of a doorknob.
D: Building inspectors condemned the house and all the residents were evicted with no notice.
B: The initial investigation began because the F.B.I. was informed of a 'terrorist' threat. The flier said "It's Annihilation Time." Get it?
N: Did you know that USA PATRIOT ACT is an anagram of U SAP AT RIOT? It's not even an anagram, really. It's Ashcroft and the rest's little joke at the expense of the quasi-to-radical left, I think.
MRR: Has there been any legal action or pro-bono civil liberties lawyer helping out with that? Will anyone have to go to court?
N: Andy Junk might have tried communicating with a lawyer or two, but I don't believe anything has ever come out of it, which is unfortunate.
B: Andy may be a bit jaded with regard to his hiring of legal help for his basement show difficulties.
MRR: One thing I love the most about the current Milwaukee scene's output is that everyone still has the gumption to put out tapes, my favorite format, personally. Modern Machines seem to be growing out of that these days, with the new stuff being primarily available on CD and vinyl. My question is: How has the segue way been for you between tapes and more 'permanent' formats, did you have any reservations? Do you still plan to release the new records on tape? I'm not calling you guys sellouts for any of this, by the way...the only place you can get my band's newest album on tape is in Lithuania.
N: Well, we all love tapes.
B: I love tapes, but I hate it when they get scratched and skip.
J: No 7"s for us, it's cassingles all the way!
N: I'd really like to put out another tape. It seems that I come across people who have one of our old tapes, every now and again, in disparate parts of the country. But it's

definitely true that a lot of people don't even have cassette players anymore, and being a format snob, as opposed to cassette enthusiast, isn't for me and the economics of the situation being what they are, i.e., we're *brokemutha fuckas*, we're gonna make sure that the first format that gets released is the most universal, and that, my friends, is the 8-track.
D: Our next tape is going to be called *For Cassette EP Fans Only*.
N: Currently, we're actually planning to have that new tape for our tour this winter, the Dec./Jan. tour.
MRR: How's New Disorder treatin' ya? You movin' them units?
D: Yeah, we owe Ernst some money, if that's what you mean by movin' them units.
N: We've been moving emails from Ernst demanding cash from "Inbox" to "Trash." Those are units!
D: Ernst is great.
J: What a sucker.
N: I really like the fact that we can show up in another town and see flyers for our show that he made and sent, because that never used to happen in the pre-Nudist Order days, and it's encouraging, since so often we've shown up to the supposed show, and found nary a soul, let alone flyers. As stated previously, in Soviet Russia, punk show cancels you.
J: Zing!
MRR: So why is it that bands from Wisconsin are so much more organic and songwriting-oriented than bands from Chicago, merely an hour away from Milwaukee?
B: When you're in hellish Chicago traffic for three hours a day it's quite easy to have the time to write a song. It's also quite easy to have the time to add a bunch of angular stops and 5/4 time signatures to the song you just wrote. I can get across my city in 15 minutes. Just enough time to think up a verse/chorus/end. See, organic.
J: Chicago likes them thar power chords.
N: If irradiated means not organic, then the songs I write are not organic.
B: We occasionally treat our albums with chem-

ical pesticides. Then we go to San Pedro, and they get into the groundwater.

J: No, they actually wash up upon the shores of Indonesia.

N: See, once we threw a stack of old Shrubbers CDs into the Pacific Ocean, right off the cliffs of the Sunken City in San Pedro, the very same place where, in *The Big Lebowski*, Donny's ashes are spread by Walter, all over the Dude.

MRR: This is beyond a matter of tone and simplicity, though you guys have excellent songs with finesse of structure, great lyrics, and harmonies cascading in catchiness. Do you think this is due to a lack of pretension or simply the result of a relative absence of hipsters in Milwaukee?

J: Absence of hipsters in Milwaukee? Pah!

(roommate Chris Van Gompel interjects, to MRR): You just don't live here! Hey, buy me some fuckin' TP, Nato.

N: Go away. Go do your if-I-decide-on-an-artwork-practice-non-TP-buyery.

J: I wouldn't necessarily say it's due to the lack of pretension. There is definitely a contingent of assholes who write great songs, but maybe it's just that in order for shit between multiple people to become a great song, you have to just let stupid crap go the way of the T-top.

N: That was confusing!

J: Mission accomplished.

N: Well, I can't really say much about lack of pretension, or relative absence of hipsters, or my pretensious hipster relatives. I've just always written songs. And I don't think I could stop if I wanted to. And, looking back at when I was really young, and way into Tom Petty, I honestly don't think the kind of songs I've written has changed that much. I don't like to imagine that I'm coming from any sort of 'pure' artistic field, filled with roses, um, probably poppies actually.

B: I think you should say 'posies.'

N: But then there's no opium allusion, mmm? Anyway, if there's a general feeling that there's a large contingent of songwriters in this world who are writing for some strange, possibly hipster, but generally assumed-to-be hollow or shallow region, I don't want to say that I prescribe to this. But you can, if you want to. Thanks for the compliments.

B: Amen.

D: I just think we rock 'cause we listen to good music and we're surrounded by it in our scene.

N: Amen!

MRR: Why is Ben not singing so much anymore?

J: Because he has a clothespin on his balls.

N: Does anyone have a problem with that? The non-singing or the clothespin I mean.

J: Not I!

MRR: Howzabout that veggie chili at Fuel cafe, what's the recipe?

D: That shit rules!

N: I like it, and I'm allergic to vegetables.

J: What, you can eat plants?

B: I've never had it, because it starts with the word "veggie."

MRR: Describe the Pizza Shuttle for us and tell us how many of you have worked there at any given time. Do they only hire punks?

N: They don't only hire punks, but they pretty much always hire punks, assuming there are punks in the idle labor pool.

B: I currently don't recommend that anyone applying uses me as a reference, because my managers want to know if they're in a band.

N: Yeah, me too. But it's really cool that they let us tour so much. I sent them a postcard once!

MRR: Question for Allison V: Where can we get that sport tea?

N: You can reach Allison at 1-800-Inhumane-Society. But none of us are her.

J: Are she.

MRR: How can Magoo get so drunk and survive?

J: He can't, he's dead.

B: He can survive, but he'll still get beat up.

D: What's that in reference to?

B: He got beat up at that party! He mouthed off to some jock guy and the guy kicked his ass! Don't you remember that? Not Jim, Magoo. This is the second time this year that this happened. Magoo woke up in the morning with black eyes, and he didn't know what happened.

D: Oh yeah.

N: How'd he find out what happened?

B: I don't know. Someone told him about it? That's how it goes in this workaday world.

N: He is responsible for the single most disgusting vomit episode I've ever seen.

J: Milk and vodka! Blecch.

N: In Soviet Russia, vodka and milk vomits Magoo!

MRR: Is Alison Lahti the living incarnation of rock?

B: I don't, but even if I did, I couldn't voice my opinion, as I have taken a vow of silence, in that I will soon be a minister of the First Day Adventist Church of Chordleplatz, TN.

N: So Chordleplatz is part of the region, then.

B: Sure. Nor can I sing. Silence, get it? I love the Jesus.

J: Chordleplatz?

B: You made that word up, Hanson.

J: It has a "t," not a "d." Learn how to spell!

MRR: Why is Dan so nice?

D: Because I have a positive mental attitude!

B: Because he's a eunuch?

D: I have no shot at the throne.

J: I wanna say "Cause he's a linuch." You know! Unix, Linux, Eunuchs, Linuchs!

N: I hope you die.

MRR: Jon Hanson, you are an SF Mission Punk fanatic. How did you get introduced to this stuff?

J: See, the thing about naked people is that I'm a fan of them. A certain publication known as *The Probe* had such things. I ordered issue six of *The Probe*, which consequently had an interview with the Naked Cult of Hickey. Soon after, they became my favorite band of all time. I could tell you that I originally bought the split with VGS for the wrong reason, but I won't. I shall also state that anyone who doesn't like Mensclub can receive a certain phallic object (i.e., my wiener) in a certain orifice (take your pick) in a non-amorous fashion.

N: And when you say 'wiener' you mean Michael Savage, right? Because, all you readers, that's his real last name. Except the 'i' and 'e' are reversed.

MRR: What reaction do you guys have when someone steals your beer? I heard you drove to NYC just to scold Sexy for stealing a 12-pack of Pabst!

D: I had to 'cause my roommate wouldn't stop complaining. It was her beer.

B: Miller already stole Pabst from us.

N: When someone steals my beer, I steal their beer, or dignity.

N: Guys that are in FKZ, wanna handle this one?

J: She's the living incarnation of stone. No, she's the living incarnation of unconsciousness. No, she owes me a dollar.

D: Um, sure. We're called Fury of A Thousand Zeuses, not FKZ.

MRR: When the hell are you touring again? When and where are you playing?

N: December 26th through January 28th, approximately.

J: Just say Boxing Day through Super Bowl Sunday, asshole.

N: But that's not true.

J: Neither is the fact that, ummm…

B: …humans evolved from primates.

D: Humans are primates.

B: Heathen!

J: Man vs. Nature: the road to victory!

N: God bless Phil Hartman. Except there is no god, Ben! Except I just became an Episcopalian, to help out the gay bishop. I figured they needed some support in his corner. So, um, go Jesus!

MRR: What else do you have to tell the world, as defined by MRR?

N: Is that your final question?

J: Is that your ultimate response?

N: I hope this is not all we have to tell the world.

B: But it is.

D: I wanna see more girls in bands.

J: I wanna be more bands in girls.

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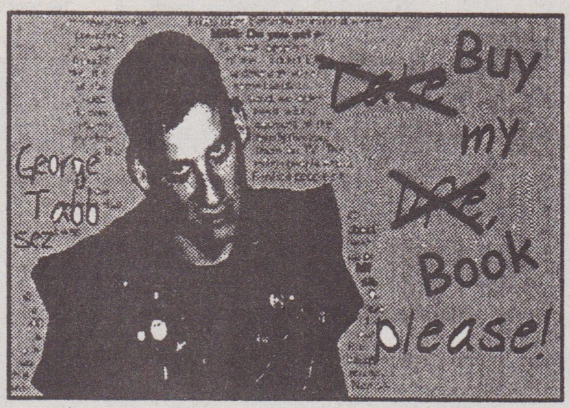

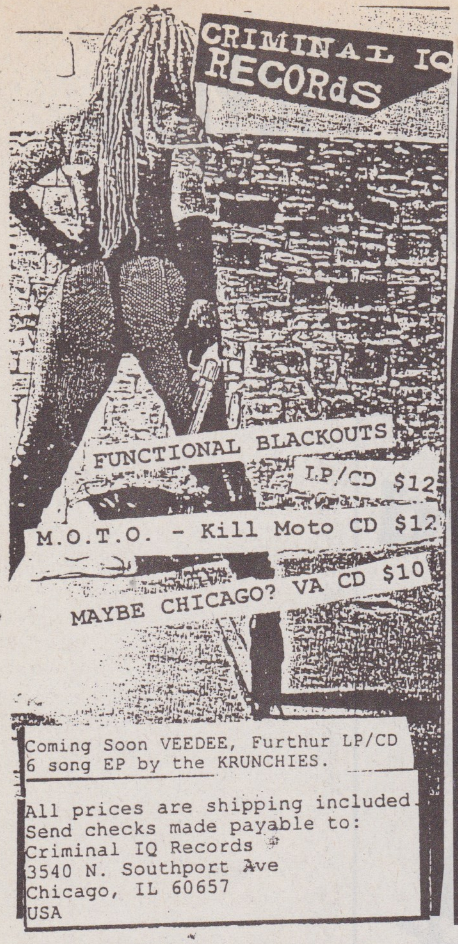

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MARCH WE 24 PROVIDENCE
MARCH TH 25 BOSTON
MARCH FR 26 NYC, CBGB (PUNK OLYMPICS)
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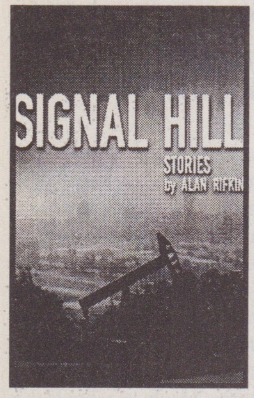


Signal Hill: Stories
Alan Rifkin
128 pages • $12.95
City Lights Books
261 Columbus Avenue
San Francisco, CA 94133

Most of us San Francisco Bay Area folks have already made up our minds about Los Angeles. You've probably heard one of us complain about its superficiality, or that they call us "NorCal," or that the city arguably hasn't produced a good band since Guns 'n' Roses. California sometimes thinks of itself much like the explosive chewing gum from the first *Mission: Impossible* film: two chemical poles that can coexist relatively peacefully until mashed together, which renders the mixture unstable, usually with catastrophic results. In spite of this ideological turf war, Alan Rifkin has teamed up with renowned San Francisco independent publisher City Lights (run by local literary luminary Lawrence Ferlinghetti) to create an engaging, if less-than-perfect collection of short stories, painting a revisionist portrait of the City of Angels for all of those whose conception of our southern brethren comes from *Clueless* and episodes of *The O.C.*

With a palpable reverence, Rifkin conjures Los Angeles so vividly that the city itself emerges as the star and protagonist in each of the five brief vignettes included in this volume. In saying that "with all the sidewalks in Encino, you could still be the only person on the street," and by having a character refer to herself as the "Priestess of Malibu," the author closely approximates the kind of deep-seated sense of location achieved in films like Quentin Tarantino's *Jackie Brown*, or Woody Allen's *Annie Hall*, as if the story was somehow bathed in the atmosphere of their respective locales. Rifkin's ability to so masterfully recall, in the truest sense of that word, a sense of place remains the most remarkable part of the book, and that in itself makes it well worth perusing.

Content-wise, Rifkin seems to have emerged from the currently reigning Chuck Palahniuk school of thought, in which emasculated male protagonists search for meaning in the aftermath of childhood dysfunction and divorce, either their parents' or their own. It's as if each story takes place in front of a backdrop of being let down. Though Rifkin never crosses over into the supernatural, as Palahniuk is apt to do, many of the themes resonate; for instance, "The Idols of Sickness," a story in which a boy comes to think that a trick he can perform with his testicles is actually a birth defect, contains implicit anxieties over what masculinity means at this point in history. As he comes to believe that his natural state is somehow a deformity, we begin to see the deeper concern: that the boy is developing his conception of how to be male without any kind of model of what is and what is not "normal."

As this instance suggests, and as Palahniuk's novels often play out, the perspective is often specifically male, with women occasionally set up as some kind of unexplainable "other." These moments do not dominate the work, but remain noticeable and can grate as one reads further. One particular passage in "The Honor System," a story of love and courtship set in Death Valley, in which the protagonist "kept yelling, asking why Catherine wouldn't stand still for two seconds so [he] could catch up, and Catherine kept yelling, asking what [he] thought love was," contains elements of this: the male's concerns are practical, while the female's ideological posture is ridiculed somewhat playfully. Rifkin works toward some sort of balance, mocking male neuroses where he can, but for the most part it seems as if he has a hard time getting out of one specific character's head. The men in the four short stories and one novella included here tend to run together in their shared anxieties and quests for meaning. I'm not suggesting any complete diversity of perspective should be achieved, and I suppose the old adage that we should "write what we know" still holds true; I merely would have liked to see Rifkin explore the psyches of some of Los Angeles's, other residents.

While keeping this criticism in mind, I do not mean to imply that Rifkin does not have moments of sheer, unabashed brilliance. There are instances, such as when the nameless narrator of "Sonority" claims that "there is a point where hopelessness and strength look like the same thing on me," in which the author creates, with terseness and concision, the most moving kind of prose poetry. The book contains enough of these moments to keep the reader engrossed, consuming page after page until the final sentence. While not quite a masterpiece, *Signal Hill* gives us the occasional profound statement, vivid characters, and stories that move briskly through the sun-drenched hills and valleys of one of our most prominent cities.

—Max Tremblay

It Makes You Want to Spit
(The Definitive Guide to Punk In N. Ireland)
Sean O'Neill & Guy Trelford
288 pages
Reekus • 77 Haddington Road
Dublin 4 • Ireland

The original version of this came out as a photocopied fanzine about five years ago. It was essentially a band-by-band history of the Ulster punk scene circa '77-'82, and a fantastic read it was, too. In fact, at the time I thought it was the best documentation of a scene I had ever read. Jump forward to today and I hold in my hands a truly unbelievable piece of punk history. This revised volume is probably three times the size, with glossy pages packed full of photographs, record covers, histories, and articles.

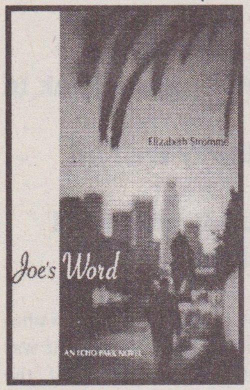
Northern Ireland in the late 70s was a hotbed of sectarian violence, and punk was one of the only things at that time bringing both Protestant and Catholic youths together. Although this book does little to explore the political history of the region, it does touch on how the sectarian conflict affected the burgeoning punk scene, which is interesting in itself, as there have been few scenes that have emerged amid such hostile surroundings. The Northern Irish scene was extremely prolific, producing literally tens of bands over a short period of time in a small geographical area. This book painstakingly records it all, from the early days of Rudi (arguably the first Belfast punk band) through to Crass playing in Belfast and the formation of the Anarchist Warzone center in the mid 80s. Every band gets at least a page, and the more prolific, well-known bands like Stiff Little Fingers, Rudi, Undertones, etc., have a number. The book is laid out alphabetically rather than chronologically, which actually makes for a more ordered read and means the book works well for reference purposes. The research that went into this book is mind-blowing—even the smallest one-single wonders have a full page with a history, photos, and a discography, as well as a spot in the "where are they now" section.

Before reading this book cover to cover, I thought I was pretty well

versed in the Ulster scene, being a fan not only of the more well known bands but also the Outcasts, Ruefrex, Protex, Starjets, etc., but on reading this, I've realized there are so many more bands that I need to check out from this scene. In between the band pages, there are pages for fanzines (like the infamous *Alternative Ulster*), punk venues (the famous Harp bar and later the anarchist Warzone center), record labels (such as the well known Good Vibrations and lesser-known Rip Off), and other scenes outside of Belfast (Derry, Omagh, etc.) There are also recent interviews and articles with many of the movers and shakers in the scene, such as Terry Hooley, head honcho of Good Vibrations Records, Petesy Burns of Stalag 17, etc., as well as people who visited Belfast (from Joe Strummer to Crass). These personal accounts are what make this book so special, although the discographies and histories of the bands are fascinating. The excitement that comes across from these personal memories really transports you back to Ulster in the 70s, giving the book an added element missing from many dry historical tomes.

Although this book is purely retrospective, O'Neill and Trelford dedicated a page to the new Ulster bands, recognizing the continuation of the Ulster punk legacy. The recognition that punk is ongoing (something glaringly absent from Steve Blush's recent, flawed *American Hardcore* book) proves that the authors are true punk music fans, not just a pair of "back in the day" scenesters who are reliving their lost youth This book really is flawless—making all the other historical hack jobs that have come out in recent years on punk seem poorly researched, muddled, and half-assed. This is far and away the best documentation of a punk scene to date, and I hope that it will stand as a blueprint for any other would-be punk historians.

—Tim Brooks



Joe's Word: An Echo Park Novel
Elizabeth Stromme
258 pages • $11.95
City Lights Books
261 Columbus Avenue
San Francisco, CA 94133

Joe's Word is entirely realistic. There is not a single element of this book that seems forced or unbelievable. The story is simple, the characters totally plausible, the setting vivid and the overall effect solid, and that's the point for a gritty noir-style text.

Joe runs a pen-for-hire business in a lower-class barrio of Los Angeles. Clients employ him for tasks ranging from the mundane to the pointless to the obscene. In one chapter, a mother asks that Joe write a letter to her child's principal to change a grade. In another situation, Joe is paid by an irate citizen to write "gripe letters" to the city about a neighboring chop shop. Another patron has Joe writing and responding to erotic letters to/from prospective overseas brides. Joe himself is a cynical, lonely, and almost hopeless person. However, the cheerful and energetic people in his surroundings counter him, and Joe's voice through his letters often betrays his bitter exterior. His dry, passionless approach to his personal relationships contrast sharply with his persona when hired to write love letters. It all shows Joe's duality and makes his character more complex, and therefore believable.

The scope of Joe's writing abilities and his command of linguistics is very appealing. Stromme—a woman convincingly writing as a man—has such a strong command of language that I am led to wonder if she does not actually do this for a living. She also shares a good sense of how relative class issues and inner-city life are, intertwining both into her story through a critical view of the power structure of America in general and LA in particular.

Joe's Word is not self-referential in the way that movies about making movies are, or songs about being a singer are, but it does give an obvious portrait of the author's interests and talents—namely, French culture and writing, respectively. Each new letter of Joe's had me eager to see how mere words could resolve or spice up the particular situation. Reading this was akin to watching big budget movies and waiting to see how extravagant the visual effects will be.

—Craig Ums

$30 Music School
Michael Dean
517 pages • $30.00
Muska & Lipman
25 Thomson Place
Boston, MA 02210
www.courseptr.com

The publishers of *$30 Music School* have unleashed the thickest "How to Rock" tome on the market, probably hoping to give it the appearance of greater comprehensiveness than its lighter siblings. It would have been sufficient to have merely produced a book that was at least somewhat useful, since most of the competition tends towards that class of pseudo-instructional pipedream fodder such as fad diets or sure-fire plans for financial security, but they clearly felt that bulk would be an essential selling point. Although they may have been right, the result is a book that could be painlessly halved without the loss of any remotely substantive information.

This quantity of padding might well anger some purchasers, were it not for the mollifying and truly inspired cost/benefit comparison to school that the title encourages. What's more, the title is considerably more than the knavish marketing ploy that might be expected: plenty of unfortunates have paid much more than $30 for an artistic education and received less of value than can be had from this book (and the enclosed CD-Rom allows the lucky reader to print out a diploma for completing the course, so you even get your sheepskin, Bubba).

The book's back cover imperative to "MAKE MUSIC, GET IT HEARD WORLDWIDE, AND MAKE A LIVING—ALL WITHOUT COMPROMISING YOURSELF TO THE WHIMS OF THE ENTERTAINMENT INDUSTRY" and the subsequent statement that "it's easier than ever to make a living making music" seem to imply that this book will illuminate the sort of magic path commonly sought by attendees of seminars and readers of books on how to make good in the entertainment field.

Fortunately, the general tone of the book is more in keeping with Mr. Dean's more sensible credo, also gracing the cover, that "Making art your full-time job is a full-time job." Even this statement contains more than a few grains of unfounded optimism, since many of the musicians profiled have to supplement their musical earnings with other employment, and Mr. Dean acknowledges this several times with commendable candor (I won't bother to quibble with whether "art" is the appropriate word, since its common usage seems to have long been devalued to mean "any creative endeavor").

He is to be further commended for his repeated emphasis on the hard and not always enjoyable labor, the pimping of oneself, and the downright drudgery that even attempting to be a professional rock musician entails.

It is to be hoped that at least some of the benighted souls who turn to this volume for guidance will pay attention to those admonitions rather than pass over them in order to linger on the passages that serve as chicken soup for the aspiring artist's soul (I won't hold my breath, since band people often possess an even more resilient gift for avoiding the Ugly Truth than other seekers after the crown of Apollo).

As an avid fan of human folly, I've read more than a few books offering advice to fledgling rockers, and *$30 Music School* contains a considerably greater quantity of useful nuggets of information than any other I've encountered. Especially praiseworthy is the level-headed discussion of lawyers, publishing, trademarks, and copyrights: authors of instructional books are usually afraid to give any useful advice in such fields, while most non-authors are gushing fountains of confidently stated misinformation, particularly regarding trademarks and copyrights).

Mr. Dean even deals with the rudimentary aspects of forming a musi-

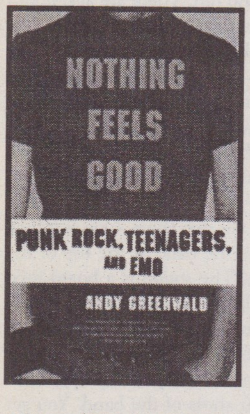
cal aggregation and belting out something approximating music in as clear a fashion as is probably possible in book form, which might well prove helpful to anyone considering the prospect of doing so for the first time.

An especially glaring omission in the coat-pulling of DIY tyros, however, is his failure to mention that certain of the independent distributors in his brief and presumably selective list are notorious for a reluctance to pay (such as Choke) and creative accounting practices (such as Choke).

I was afraid that *$30 Music School* would be as grating and silly as the author's self-published novel, which had the unfortunate (but far from uncommon) appearance of a collection of unevenly-written anecdotes piled up until the whole was incorrectly presumed to resemble a hunk of medium-rare Art. But what were stylistic deficiencies in attempted literature—an overly chatty tone prone to exasperating repetitiveness, a propensity for clichés, and an apparent belief that there exist few thinkers more worth quoting than the author and his acquaintances—are much less distracting in a book with a clear functional purpose that encourages adherence to models of cohesiveness.

Of course, critical judgment of the work at hand also benefits greatly from the less daunting competition in the instructional rock field: it's unlikely that Mr. Dean will ever write a novel up to the standards of, say, *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court* or *The Haunting of Hill House*, but he's unquestionably written a better rock handbook than *Rock Star 101* by Marc Ferrari (guitarist of Keel, Cold Sweat, et al.), and the rest of that dire ilk.

—Dr. Dante



Nothing Feels Good:
Punk Rock, Teenagers and Emo
Andy Greenwald
321 pages • $14.95
St. Martin's Griffin
175 5th Avenue
New York, NY 10010

If the title of this book doesn't make you queasy, then you have a stronger stomach than I do. The cover photo of a stereotypical spindly and hairless emo man-child doesn't help. Nor does the *Catcher in the Rye* color scheme ("It's *Catcher in the Rye* with guitars" claims the front quote from those pundits at *Blender* magazine). Or that the writer is a senior editor at *Spin*. I understand if you refuse to even touch this book. Me, I had my library order it. And this review constitutes my penance for consistently being around what used to be called emotional hardcore.

Whether you start with Rites of Spring, Jawbreaker, the Promise Ring, or Lifetime (and the book explores each of these unwitting forefathers), the diluting evolution to today's emo takes the same, sad trajectory. The music becomes slicker, any punk edges blunted, the lyrics bolder in denying women agency, and the whole mechanism behind it resembling the one behind traditional capitalist rock stars. Good riddance, you could rightfully say, but to those of us who still consider Rites of Spring protest music, this Planet of the Apes-style devolution is, well, enough to make you either walk away or play abstruse songs forever.

Nothing Feels Good can be a compelling, timely read (if you care to debate whether or not emo is a unholy matrimony of the Smiths and power-chords). Greenwald is a savvy enough journalist to let the scenarios speak for themselves, whether 15-year-old Dashboard Confessional fans from Long Island or Chris Carrabba himself. He's fond of phrases like "Jawbreaker is the Rosetta Stone of contemporary emo" and Schwarzenbach the "poet laureate of scruffy white male angst." Jawbreaker's descent is an apt metaphor here, with their unapologetic signing to Geffen and later, self-indulgent songs about, you know, girls and touring and stuff. Blake may well be "the Salinger of emo on wax," but more debatable is the writer's interpretation of *Dear You*. Did listeners feel betrayed because we'd "viewed him as a tattered, secular priest to lay their burdens on"? I hated *Dear You* because it sounded like a dull, dull rock radio album with a singer that sounded bored, bored, bored. And I find Jets to Brazil anything but "filled with hook-heavy savvy." But the stakes are larger here than the endless debate on *Dear You*.

Flash-in-the-pan Dashboard Confessional makes a telling blueprint as well—flounder in your local hardcore scene, cultivating advantageous street cred, tattoos, connections, etc. Take a break from it and work on some sensitive male singer/songwriter bits, and thanks to internet/marketing magic, you've got not just a bedroom hobby but a whole career. And Jimmy Eat World? No, not even on the Christie Front Drive split. Sunny Day Real Estate? Please. Was anyone that surprised when that guy went hermetically Christian? Good riddance, chief. I'll blame you, too, for gentrifying a scene. Call it "egalitarian" if you want, but it's typical male rock 'n' roll fantasy. Even the author acknowledges the "self-obsessed sexist solipsism" of modern emo's heartache, objectification, and revenge fantasies. In the prescient mid-90s words of Harriet the Spy, it's the reverse psychology of using the emo scene to pick-up chicks.

Look, I don't want to deny the young, white baseball-capped dudes their chance to emote to some catchy music. We all like to sing along and feel like we're better than those 'N Sync fans. But—and this point is crucial, albeit obvious—to a lot of us, this is more than music. More than a hot rock show, and more than an excuse to stay emotionally immature forever. Maybe today's mainstream emo really will expand the worldview of the average listener (the way that REM and the Smiths did for me years ago). I do trust teens to eventually figure out what's passing adolescent passion, what's sheer marketing, and what it really means to find your own voice and place in this abject world. If makeoutclub.com or livejournals or Saves the Day shows help, then go for it. But let's not pretend we're part of the same community anymore, OK?

With each profile of the quasi-major label bands and their pretty boy bands in this book, a curious, defensive, and spurred logic evolves. Sure, they're familiar with house/basement shows, the handwritten zines, and the "selling out" debate. But they've now chosen the safe, normative route. Victory Records darlings Thursday offer this gem: "One of the things we've always said is that there's no point in being a political band because most people in political bands are fucking total assholes." Hmm. Drive-Thru Records also decries, "I'm not fucking punk rock because I don't want to be like those other assholes." So, with their rejection from us critical meanies in the DIY scene, this new wave of emo marketers have successfully flooded the internet and are gunning for the deep pockets of the "normal...nicely dressed" kids. Again, Greenwald gives ample space to the different sides of this argument, and for that I applaud his book.

Further, if there's anything more to glean from this major label book, it's how eloquent those from the punk community sound. Sure, Greenwald calls Ian MacKaye "righteous" and Jessica Hopper's views "radical feminist." Maybe they are. I don't consider those words derisive, unlike the term "hipsterati" that Greenwald also uses. Can you deny that "emo in 2002 is just a passive-aggressive rewrite of the Rolling Stones "Under My Thumb", as Hopper rightly states? The Long Island hardcore scene gets profiled and becomes an emotional climax of the book. By describing a typical basement show by the Insurgent and a conversation with DIY filmmakers Ben Holtzmann and Joe Carroll, Greenwald counteracts his own dismissive assertion that "DIY is empowering, but it is, at heart, a cul-de-sac. It exists in opposition to getting bigger, it exists because it won't get bigger." But he's using "bigger" in economic or numerical moving-units terms, denying the unlimited transformative value of music and community. It's as frustrating as a Jimmy Eat World video. Because we know that DIY is endless, right? Check the first Ghost Mice song on the Rymodee split: "The Road Goes on Forever."

The final chapter of this book deals with the online community of emo kids, their internet diaries and public/private confessions. The entries are a pained, compelling read, like anyone's at that age. It's the very public offering of their innermost fears and feelings that separates it from paper journals of the past. In the same way that today's emo bands can rely on fashion signifiers and key pained phrases, so too can online personalities be a way to avoid meaningful, human contact in all its terrifying complexity.

And, hey, just last night a crusty punk called Ryan, Caroline, and me "emo fags." Then said how we all looked the same to him. See, everyone can enjoy emo nowadays. What a wonderful fucking world.

—Travis Fristoe

MOVIES

BRING ME THE HEAD OF GENE SISKEL

CAROLYN KEDDY

TEENAGE DREAMS SO HARD TO BEAT

Apparently not many people can recognize a song by the first few notes. I find this strange, since I can identify most songs I know the minute they start. I would have probably cleaned up on *Name That Tune* if they only used punk songs. Most people know the song when the vocals begin. I am always amazed when a classic song comes on and you can visibly notice people's reaction time. It's quite amusing. I can name that song in two notes. "Teenage Kicks" by the Undertones.

Teenage Kicks: The Story of The Undertones is a great band documentary. I hope I am not only saying that since they are one of my favorite bands. It combines amazing live footage with band videos and interviews with the band, Good Vibrations' Terry Hooley, Sire's Seymour Stein, John O'Neill's wife Caroline moderated by John Peel. Peel is known for being responsible for breaking the Undertones by playing them on his radio show. He says "Teenage Kicks" is his favorite song and he wants it played at his funeral.

The Undertones were a bunch of teenagers from Derry, Northern Ireland when they got the band together. In the beginning of the film, guitarist Damien O'Neill reads from a giant scrapbook a letter he wrote to John Peel when he sent him a copy of "Teenage Kicks." He included the band members' ages: John, guitar, 20: Mickey, bass, 17: Billy, drums, 18: Sharkey, vocals, 18: and Vinny (Damien), guitar, 16 3/4. John Peel didn't listen to record right away and his reply letter states what an industry bastard he is. He signed his letter John Peel, the world's most boring man.

The influence John Peel had on the Undertones' success is well known. Seymour Stein of Sire Records talks about driving in England on his way to see the Searchers and hearing "Teenage Kicks" on the radio. He thought it was an amazing song and told his assistant Paul McNally (later dubbed "Noisy McNally" by the Undertones, due to the fact that he didn't talk that much) to go to Derry to see the band. Sire wanted to sign the Undertone, so Mickey and Feargal went to London to negotiate. As Feargal remembers it, he let out a laugh. He didn't know any thing about business. Stein offered them £16,000 advance. Feargal called the others in Derry to ask about it. Naturally, the others wanted more. Damien said they asked for £60,000 and Stein started cursing uncontrollably. They stuck to their price. "We want the same deal the Clash got." They got it.

Most people expect Irish bands to be political. I am glad they addressed this in the documentary. The Undertones are from Derry, the site of the 1972 Bloody Sunday massacre. They lived with the memory of this every day. They didn't want to get up in front of their friends and start singing about "barbed wire." They wanted escape. The first Undertones songs were about lusting after girls and more uplifting things. Then as they got popular, they felt a need to let others know what was going on in Northern Ireland even if it was veiled in a pop song. Damien recalls writing the song "It's Gonna Happen" about the hunger strikes. The Undertones played it on *Top Of The Pops* the day Bobby Sands died. Damien wore a black armband and thinking back on it, he didn't know if it was good idea or not. He didn't want to alienate anyone.

I am happy to see Feargal Sharkey in **Teenage Kicks: The Story of The Undertones**. Since he isn't in the reformed band, it makes me wonder what is really going on. I read what they say in interviews and whatnot, but I am one of those people that always assumes that there is more going on than what is being said. Feargal makes sense when he explains that he was asked to do the reunion show and he couldn't see getting up on stage on his 36th birthday to sing "Teenage Kicks." So he didn't do it.

Just looking at the old footage in **Teenage Kicks: The Story of The Undertones** it is so hard to think of the Undertones without Sharkey. The other members try to justify it by saying what a thrill it is to get on stage now and see how excited people are to hear the old songs. I know that is true, but there is something great about Sharkey's presence and his attitude. His introduction to "True Confessions" on the *Old Grey Whistle Test* is, "This is the last good song of the program." I don't know who was coming up next, but that is pretty funny. Maybe it was the last song of the program.

Teenage Kicks: The Story of The Undertones DVD includes some great extras, including seven promotional videos the band did between 1978 and 1982. The best of these is "My Perfect Cousin." It was filmed in the O'Neill's back yard and at their school. You get to see the Undertones at their best. Sharkey is dominating the camera while the others carry their equipment up the staircase. The band members play football and younger boys pose as the band. This is what a music video should be: silly and fun. There are also bonus interviews with the band and John Peel. It is a great documentary.

Arriving a week after the **Teenage Kicks: The Story of The Undertones** DVD was a DVD of the Sex Pistols playing at the Longhorn in Dallas, Texas, January 10, 1978. This is their second, most infamous US show. The first, obviously, is the San Francisco one where the band broke up. The Longhorn show is the one where Sid Vicious smashed a guy over the head with his bass. I've seen the footage of this a million times and you probably have too. But I haven't seen the whole show.

The DVD starts out pretty bad. There are two shots. One is a long shot from the back of the club. You can barely see the band at the top of the screen. The other is a close up of Johnny Rotten. The sound is a board mix, which means that you don't get a good feeling of how it actually sounded that night. The vocals are very loud and the guitar can be heard. The bass is non-existent which may substantiate the rumor that they never turned Sid's bass on. The drums are barely audible. Fortunately, the camera work picks up they seem to increase to three and they get closer and better shots of the band. You get used to the sound.

Once the band gets about three songs into the set, they start to be a lot of fun. I think they realize what a ridiculous situation they are in and start to make the most of it. Steve Jones keeps referring to the audience as cowboys. Johnny Rotten places his finger against one nostril and blows his snot at the audience. Then he comments, "It's the living circus," as he gestures toward Sid. The Sid fight is missing from the this, but I've seen that enough and you get to see what was happening on the other side of the stage as three stage people quickly run across the stage to Sid's side. The next shot of him, he is all bloody. I recognize the guy who he hits from DOA. He is standing in the front row during the show. Steve Jones also almost gets into a fight.

Watching this show, you can see why people were into the Sex Pistols. They were great performers. This show was packed and the people were going crazy. They managed to rile up a bunch of rednecks.

Later the same year The Cramps were riling up the patients at Napa State Hospital. **The Cramps Live at Napa State Mental Hospital** is the DVD issue of the Target Video. The footage is rough. It is shot in black and white with minimal lighting, making it hard to see at some points. The sound is distorted and shitty. That doesn't bother me. I prefer to hear the Cramps this way. This performance is worth it.

By the forth song, "Human Fly," one of the patients is up on stage, grabbing the microphone away from Lux. She gets into yelling and is having a great time. When it is time for Lux to continue singing he grabs the mic from her. She walks off stage. Next song she returns to sing. Lux puts his arm around her and they both sing into the mic. Then he gets annoyed and pushes her aside. Some of the other patients start to get in to it. By the end of the show everyone is on stage going crazy and having a great time. It is pretty fun to watch.

The Cramps Live at Napa State Mental Hospital also includes the

Target Video sampler with live stuff from Crime, Throbbing Gristle, Crucifix, MDC, and others. Hopefully, this means Target will start releasing all their great videos on DVD.

For more information on **Teenage Kicks: The Story of The Undertones:** www.theundertones.com or **The Cramps Live at Napa State Mental Hospital:** www.musicvideodistributors.com. The Sex Pistols DVD has no address.

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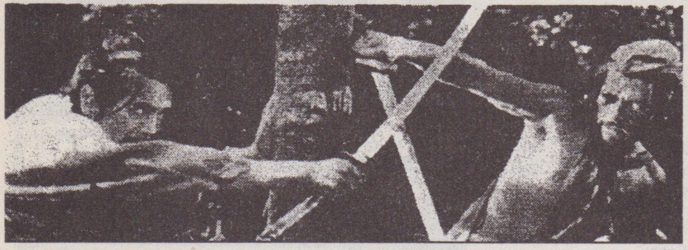

MONSTERS IN DISGUISE

She has a splotchy complexion, uncooperative hair, a snaggle-toothed smile, and 40 pounds of extra weight thanks to a diet of potato chips. Thanks to all this, Charlize Theron bears an amazing resemblance to Aileen Wuornos, perhaps our first female serial murderer. The main interest in **Monster** lies in the transformation of Hollywood glam star to a grubby street hooker; it's the kind of performance that has Oscar written all over it.

Wuornos meets young Selby Wall (Cristina Ricci, who also seems to have bulked up on mayo and chips) at a gay bar. Wuornos isn't gay (yet, anyway), but Wuornos gets her alcohol anywhere she can find it. Selby is desperate for love, and Wuornos is just desperate—for shelter, companionship, anything except a beating. They spend their first night in a seedy hotel—almost scared of each other.

A few days later, when Wuornos goes hooking, one of her johns drives her off the road, beats her unconscious, and douses her genitals in rubbing alcohol. Presumably in self-defense, Wuornos empties a gun into the creep. As with most of the guys she meets, you're kind of happy to see her pump them with lead.

Wuornos comes hack to the hotel room with a handful of cash and the jingle of car keys. As "Crimson and Clover" swells in the background, Aileen and Selby make love, and we're forced to watch.

When Wuornos finally tells Selby about what soon expands into a series of murders, she tries to get deep. "People kill each other every day," she lectures. "For what? Religion? Politics?" Writer/director Patti Jenkins shows a tin ear for political nuance (much less the facts).

The most compelling scene occurs late in the film, when a drunken Wuornos gets a ride from a Good Samaritan. TV reports have already started posting the pair's picture on the evening news. The gun slips out of her purse, and she's forced to lead the man into the woods—almost like in the classic scene from the Coen brothers' **Miller's Crossing**. Both are desperate for a solution, and in the terror of the moment, neither can find one.

Monster is as rigorously imaginary as the recent Reagan biopic (but not as fun). Writer/director Jenkins frames the drama as an off-kilter **Thelma and Louise**—but with lots more bodies.

For the truth on the Wuornos issue, your best source is probably documentarian Nick Broomfield. His 1994 film, **Aileen Wuornos: The Selling of a Serial Killer** focused on the pathetic cadre of lawyers, cops, and supposed friends trying to cash in on the story. But now, under a decade later, Wuornos' appeals all but exhausted, and Florida governor Jeb Bush is pushing a hard-line death penalty policy to rival Texas. Broomfield offers his conscientious objection in **Aileen: The Life and Death of a Serial Killer**.

Broomfield appreciates the difficulty of sympathizing with Wuornos. In early courtroom testimony, she'd claimed that her customers repeatedly sodomized her, among other tortures. Here, she admits that her murders along the Florida highways were purely for profit (a reality **Monster** ignores). Apparently, her victims weren't even prospective customers. While he's in the area, Broomfield plans to investigate her gloomy past.

Surrendered up by her mother at birth, Aileen received a strict upbringing that didn't protect her from repeatedly molestations from as early as eight. As a teenager, Wuornos became so promiscuous that her stepfather kicked her out the house. She survived the Missouri winters living in an abandoned car on blocks. The weather might have otherwise killed her, but she soon adapted to a life of a highway hooker, staying in hotels when she could. Eventually, she migrated to Florida, where things turned *really* ugly.

Colorful characters populate Broomfield's documentaries, but the main star is always Broomfield himself. His engaging manner and English accent put most of his interviewees at ease—even as he traps them in their lies.

As the days to the execution draw near, Wuornos allows only Broomfield to interview her. But by this time, she's fallen in to a deep madness. She claims that guards aim sonic saves at her day and night. She washes all her food, suspecting that it's been tainted with mind-altering poisons. And despite these and other extravagant delusions, a panel of three psychiatrists (appointed by Jeb Bush) declared her sane—in an interview that lasts all of fifteen minutes. Broomfield wonders aloud what it takes to be *insane*.

In the end, Wuornos emerges as a psychopath who realizes her threat to society, and argues eloquently for her execution. It's impossible to feel much sympathy for Wuornos as a murderer, but it's bard not to feel something for someone who's so clearly anguished. She may be guilty, but Broomfield makes sure she gets her say.

And then there are those whose guilt is more difficult to ascertain. In **The Fog of War**, Errol Morris offers a documentary based on the lifetime recollections of Robert McNamara, Secretary of Defense during the rising tide of the Vietnam War. Morris doesn't take the easy course; he travels with McNamara to the critical times in his life as the audience tries to make sense of the man's contradictions. In some ways, it's like trying to decipher the American identity.

McNamara's first memory, at the age of two, was of people cheering, running through the streets. It was the end of World War I—the war to end all wars. During the Second World War, he proved a capable assistant to hardliner General Curtis LeMay. It was about here that he began formulating his "Eleven Rules" for successful management.

"In order to do good, you may have to do evil," goes one rule. We're reacquainted with images of Japan during World War II—the firebombing of Tokyo, the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. LeMay, McNamara's superior during much of the war, muses that if America had been the focus of war trials, we'd mostly likely be charged guilty of atrocities.

Application of his rules led him to a successful corporate career, followed by his shortest and most prestigious job. After the worst downturn in the history of Ford Motors, McNamara was conferred the position of company president—the first time someone not from the Ford family held the position. But short time later, he received a message from the newly inaugurated President Kennedy. He was offered the position of Secretary of Defense—even though he had no experience in politics or government. He accepted, even though it meant his income would shrink to a fraction of what it had been in corporate life.

Errol Morris leads us through a wealth of fascinating material on the Kennedy and Johnson administrations, including rare tapes of staff meetings that show government happening behind closed doors. McNamara continually urges for de-escalation in Vietnam.

Years later, McNamara realized that while the US felt it was fighting for the freedom of the Vietnamese (or at least that was the public rationale), the Vietnamese leaders felt they were fighting against American territorialism. (Vietnam had been the focus of territorialism well before Kennedy and Johnson arrived on the scene.) Two sides fighting against each other for the same goal.

"Belief and knowledge are most often wrong," goes number two, a rule born from hard experience during the war. "Be prepared to rethink your decisions," goes another." Two pieces of wisdom that came too late for too many.

McNamara, with his hard-set jaw and distinctive slicked-back hair, has almost become known as an icon for the Vietnam War. As the conflict progressed, he found himself trying to serve President Johnson's misguided policies instead of keeping true to his own. As things grew increasingly intolerable, he sent a private memo to Johnson about his views on the war. Within days, he was no longer Secretary of Defense. Johnson gave him the Medal of Freedom—the highest honor a civilian can receive—and Johnson himself excused himself from a reelection bid.

Several of McNamara's warnings come off as sharp criticisms of US involvement in Afghanistan and Iraq—pointers from a man seems to have learned from his most costly mistakes.

Comments? Email me at **anywhichway@myway.com**.

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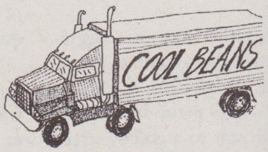

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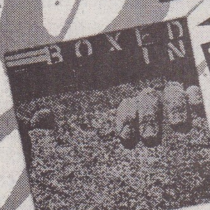

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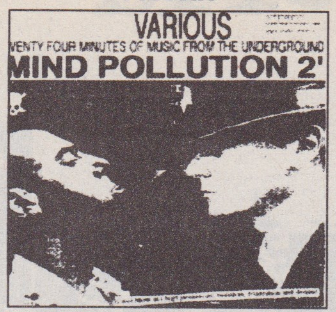

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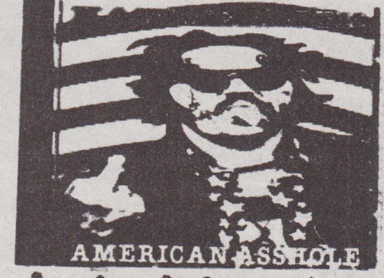

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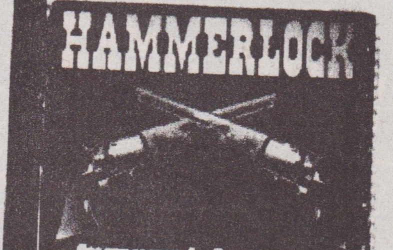

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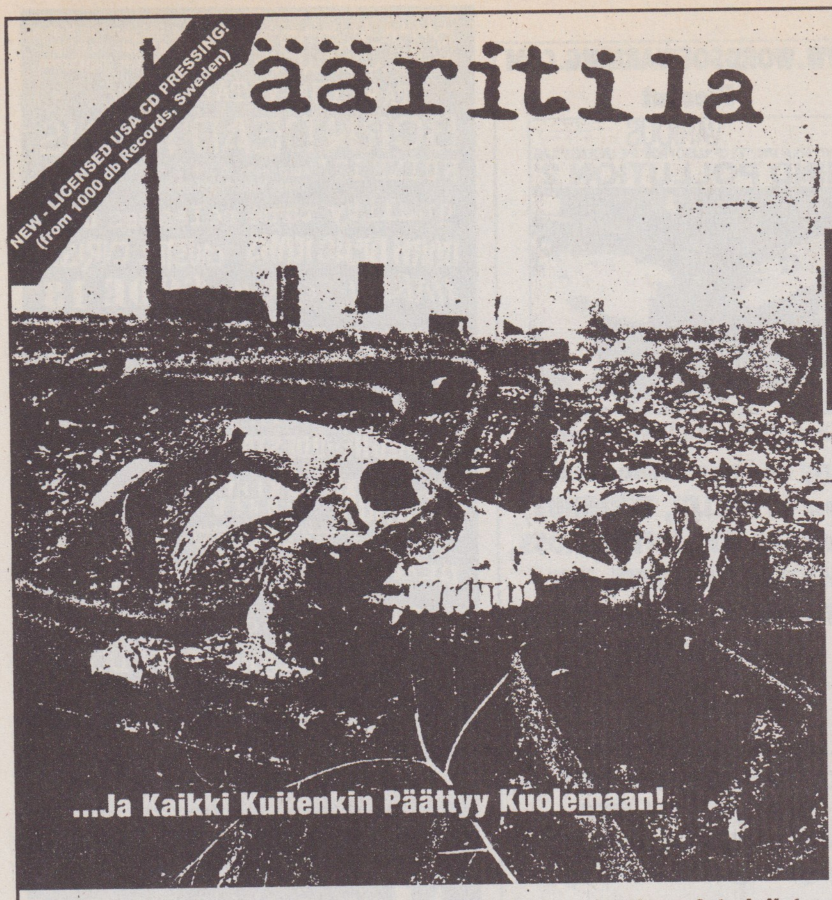

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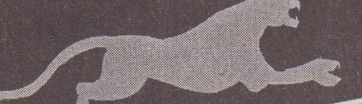

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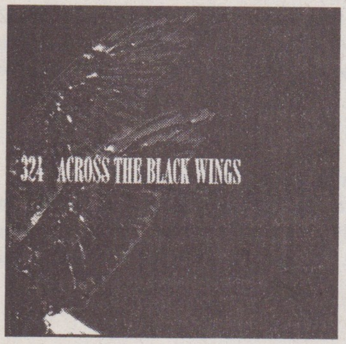


7/10 SPLITS – "Yard Sale" CD

I hate it when a band doesn't put their name on the front of the packaging. I thought the name of the band was YARD SALE and told people I liked it. Now I find out that the band is actually called 7/10 SPLIT and that *Yard Sale* is the album name. Hopefully their isn't a shitty band called YARD SALE somewhere, but I bet there is. 7/10 SPLIT play better rock meets SCREECHING WEASEL than I bowl. I do bowl like crap though. This CD is not crap though and isn't a bad listen. (JF)
(Big Neck, PO Box 8144, Roanoke, VA 20195)

324 – "Across The Black Wings" CD

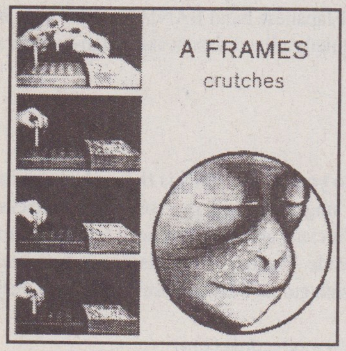
I seem to recall 324 sounding more grindy, more like DISCORDANCE AXIS, but it seems like the TRAGEDY bug has struck these Japanese punx, like it has so many others. Heavy as fuck with those melodic undertones—but fear not they still cut loose for some ripping blasts of skull crushing depravity mixed with fetus melting grooves. Brutalitar, dude—but not totally. They keep it really interesting; in the way they mix up all the elements. Truth be told I was sorta dreading reviewing this, but it's a total ripper, worthy of tracking down. (MT)
(HG Fact, 105 Nakanoshinbashi-M, 2-7-15 Yayoi-Cho, Nakano, Tokyo 164-0013, JAPAN, hgfact@japan.interq.or.jp)

2000 MANIACS – "State College Hardcore 1984" EP

Fans of 2000 MANIACS will want to check out this eleven song EP, which features the band's hard-to-find 4-track demos. While the original masters are lost forever, this cassette dub sounds clean and has the rawness to complement the music. It's basic HC, not too distinguished, with vocals that mostly follow the guitar riffs—though "Psycho III" emerges as a standout with its barreling energy and unexpected changes in riffing. Good lyrics, comes on marbled red vinyl. (SS)
(Vicious Circle, P O Box 4621, Richmond, VA 23220)

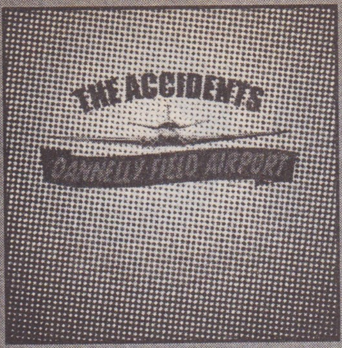
A FRAMES – "Crutches" EP

"Crutches" is another outstanding song from the A FRAMES. It's minimal, tortured, and resigned to various unpleasant realities. The second medically themed song, "Membrane," is also good. The B-side is a feedback-saturated. Neu cover, very medieval in mood. There's a certain intrigue about the A FRAMES that I can't quite put my finger on; it's like having a very simple conversation with a very complicated person. (AC)
(Royal c/o Polly Maggoo, 5, rue Guy Moquet, 75017 Paris, FRANCE, pollymaggoo@free.fr)



ACCIDENT ON THE EAST LANCS – "Shotguns and Hotshots" LP

ACCIDENT ON THE EAST LANCS wasn't a very large blip on the radar of early 80s punk bands, but this UK outfit gets a second life with this release. The vocals and spare guitars are reminiscent of middling EATER. Highlights include the mid-tempo "What's New" —which almost has a BUZZCOCKS feel, and "Back End of Nowhere" (from their EP) is so good we hear the album version, too—which I liked even better. A little uniform from song to song, but overall listenable and even catchy. (SS)
(Last Years Youth)



ACCIDENTS – "Dannelly Field Airport" EP

Proving once again that boring rocknroll street punk can be produced anywhere in the world. In the case of this EP is Germany. (JF)
(www.incgnitorecords.de)

ACCUMULATIVE POISON / FOUR MINUTE WARNING – split EP

On one side we have ACCUMULATIVE POISON (who existed from 1979-1982) who play sorta plodding, inept punk rock with lyrics typical of UK bands of the time—you know the nuclear war that will destroy us all is coming soon, and about how you don't want to work in the factory. It's OK, and is notable mostly given that certain members went on to do time in The 'TONE. On the flip we gots FOUR MINUTE WARNING (pre-WAT TYLER) from '83 delivering up some very, very raw punk rock that was quite influenced by CRASS and the rest of the peace punk scene of the time. Really inept, but since I'm a sucker for this style, I kinda really like it. (MT)
(Rugger Bugger)

IAN PAGE & THE AFFAIR – "Prove It / I'm A Man"

….gosh, I don't know what to think of this one so far….very motherfucking slick….!!! Let's listen to the flip and see if I can get this old cock of mine just a little hard…..whoa, it's the old SPENCER DAVIS GROUP tune…..originally sung by the very young Stevie Winwood…….this version is sooooo over the top that it comes off like KC & THE SUNSHINE BAND or the VILLAGE PEOPLE pulling off the number…..and that's what redeems this record for me, it's utter cheese-ball value…..dick-cheese so firm that you can cut it into cubes and feed them to your mother…..!!!!(SW)
(Detour, PO Box 18, Midhurst, West Sussex, GU29, UNITED KINGDOM, www.detourrecords.co.uk)

ALL FOR NOTHING – "Creating a Downfall" CD

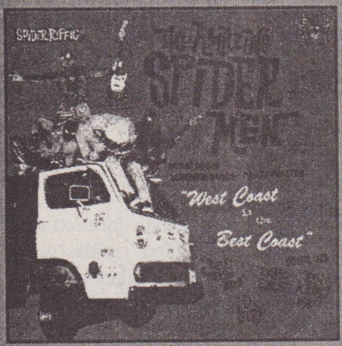
This is bad. Whiny melodic hardcore that takes heavily from bands like STRIKE ANYWHERE, LIFETIME and AFI. Boring layout. Nothing original, nothing interesting. Just bland, predictable melodic punk shit with astoundingly digital-sounding production. One of them looks like the asshole guy from *Friends*. Mothers, lock up your daughters. (WR)
(Infected)

THE AMAZING SPIDER MEN – "Boom Boom Summer Dance Party Platter" EP

After so many promises to not further pollute our culture by repressing their vinyl biscuits once they go out of print, it looks as though Boom Boom Records has finally sold out. I guess the demand for this sole testament of the late AMAZING SPIDER MEN's scuzzy mix of frat grease and evil surf music was such that Boom Boom couldn't resist the easy money. (DD)
(Boom Boom, 20720 S.E. 192nd Street, Renton, WA 98058)

ASS CHORD SERVICE – "Massage Included" CD

Shitty melodic punk rock from Germany, like BAD RELIGION meets GOOD RIDDANCE meets NOFX, but more minor chords. Boring-ass layout with the "rough" look you can add in on Photoshop. The lyrics are fucking cool, though, and make up for the lameness of the music. Shit is fucking funny: "Punk, metal, alternative, corporate rock still sucks, rockin' millionaires, want their garage back, but it's packed with German cars, gotta write a song of a bitch." And there's more where that came from. No dice. (WR)
(Ass-Card, Annestr. 5, 44137 Dortmund, GERMANY, www.asscardrecords.com)



ATARASSIAGRÖP – "Aqui Estamos" CD

All over the map on this shiny disc—on one track we have ska, on another reggae bits, then random tracks that raging, anthemic hardcore punk that brings to mind the finer moments of MANLIFTINGBANNER, DEAD STOOL PIGEON or their neighbors from the Iberian peninsula, SIN DIOS. The powerful sing-a-long choruses and driving guitars make those moments stand out, especially when paired with the rather sleep inducing ska chunks. If this was an EP with just the more straightforward punk tracks I'd love it, but ska still does nothing for me. (MT)
(Mad Butcher, Kurze Geismarstr. 6, D-37073, Gottingen, GERMANY, www.madbutcher.com)

BANJAX – CD

Five short, fast, basic hardcore punk songs from all-girl Japanese band BANJAX, so the easy comparison to make is GAIA. The vocalists of BANJAX cross between quietly mixed shouts and tough-as-fuck screaming. This short CD is really well delivered. (ZM)
(MCR, 157 Kamiagu Maizuru, Kyoto 624-0913, JAPAN)

BANNER OF THUGS – "First Feat of Arms" LP

Fuck yes! BANNER OF THUGS brings the hammer to your house! This is fierce skinhead rock with fangs barred! The vocals are gruff and menacing, the guitar player singes you with precise pinpoint attacks. BANNER OF THUGS sing about comradery, drinking, mistrust of politicians and society's need to have a convenient scapegoat. Most of the singing is in English with lyrics printed inside. The music on this disc is first rate oi with the skinhead vocals steeped in beer. Great musicianship abounds with guitar, bass and drums. This is a very strong record! Get your copy of *First Feat of Arms* today.
(Blind Beggar, Bogenstr. 25, 66957 Eppenbrunn, GERMANY; www.oirecords.com)

BEHIND ENEMY LINES – "The Global Cannibal" CD

Total anarcho-crust fury that would serve well as the soundtrack to smashing the fuck out of the state. If the lyrics don't get you pissed off enough to start filling your 40 oz bottle with gasoline, then the relentless pacing of the crushing steamroller of rockin' crust that is the music will definitely get your head pounding in time with your fists as they punch George Bush Jr.'s smug-shit-filled face in (don't you wish!) A strong release from these long-active Pennsylvania punx, including ex-members of AUS ROTTEN, the PIST, and REACT. Comes with a thick booklet with all the lyrics and great graphics. (WM)

(Antagony Media, PO Box 10790, Pittsburgh, PA 15203, www.atagonymedia.com)

BERLINER WEISSE – "Albtraum" LP

These versatile Germs primarily play street punk and hardcore, but they don't shy away from a little ska. Plenty of tight blazing tunes with melodic choruses sung in German. My German is barely existent, but I must say, German vocals make everything sound so crucial. "Hang on Schlüpfer, Schlüpfer hang on! Whoa whoa!" This is definitely confusing, but after a few beers, I'm screaming along side the stereo pumping my fist! It feels so crucial. (HM)

(Scum Fuck Tradition, PSF 100709, 46527 Dinslaken, GERMANY, www.scumfucktradition.de)

BINGO / S.I.K.A. – split EP

Woah, crazed chaos on the BINGO side. Complete chaos meets insanity, add some weird-ass weirdness, whirl into a potent noisey brew, end up with some fast fast crash smash thrash grind that sounds like it could be Japanese (these nuts are Swedish), and related to the early BOREDOMS or U.F.O. OR DIE high on thrashcore. I bet you a donut that they're completely crazed, off-the-hook live. My word. S.I.K.A., on the flip, are in the fast late 80s hardcore vein that's popular with the circle pitters everywhere. I'm thinking they like LÄRM and RIPCORD. There is a slight Japanese quality to the vocals that I can't pinpoint. Anyway, an interesting choice of bands to share a split. A little something for thrash and noise-core fans, it seems. (WM)

(Biosphere, Brancskæá 3, 85105 Bratislava, SLOVAKIA, biosphere666@hotmail.com)

BLASTROCK – "Judge" CD

This is some full on METAAALLL! These dudes are rockin' along the lines of JUDAS PRIEST with THIN LIZZY and a little dash of MAIDEN. It sounds pretty good, if yer lookin' to RAWK. (HM)

(Zorch, klostergatan 7-9, 70361 Örebro, SWEDEN, www.zorchproductions.com, www.blastrock.tk)

BOMBEROS – "Bringing Down the Neighborhood Average" EP

Hmmm. I'm not a huge fan of hardcore that has metal tendencies. And as far as metal-tinged hardcore goes, this isn't up there with my favorites. It's faster paced, it's got the throat vocals, it's got the extracurricular guitar work, and it's got song titles that include "Lick the Cum Off My Boots," "Groupie Slut," and " Well Hung." I can't imagine that I'll even remember this one in a couple of months. It is pressed on some nice, fat vinyl, for what it's worth. (KK)

(Duplicate)

BOOKS LIE – "Hall of Fame of Fire" LP

I hadn't heard BOOKS LIE for a long time before listening to this new LP of theirs. Were they always this sassy fast rock 'n' roll? So I listened to the two previous LPs and yes, yes they were, though they've always managed to mix it up with slow, driving hardcore parts that you can nod your head to. If you like them, you'll like this. Despite line-up changes, this band has grown, but not changed drastically. I was surprised to see songs about popping pills and drinking whisky. In one song, I think they attempt to be political, but the songs ends with "it's about time we get our friends together, drink some beers, smoke some weed, build a bomb, blow some shit up." Do blow some shit up, but please do so when you're sober. (ZM)

(Level Plane)

BOSS MARTIANS – "The Set-Up" LP

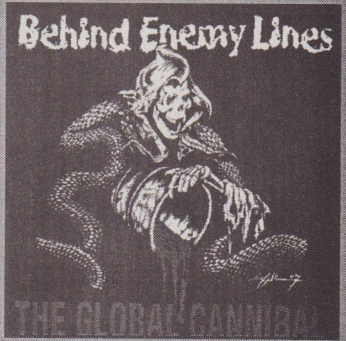
Aside from the butt ugly cover art this record is fucking fantastic. It's well written power pop at it's best. There's some ELVIS COSTELLO and NICK LOWE, there's some 20/20 and NERVES, there's even a little pop punk. It's kinda weird to think this is the same band who used to be all frat rock and drag city surf and now they're all pink Chuck Taylors and bleach blonde power pop. The times are a-changin'. Fuck this is just really, really good. Screaming Apple really knows how to pick 'em. (BM)

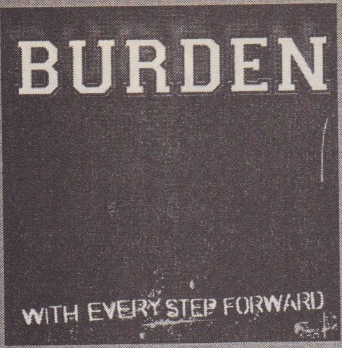
(Screaming Apple, Dustemichstr. 14, 50939 Köln, GERMANY, www.screamingapple.com)

BULLET UNION – "Stay Indie, Don't Be a Hater" EP

A little research proved to be useful on this as I found out that this band contains members of DEAD INSIDE (great SWIZ-influenced band) and COMET GAIN. Anyways, this single is a bit of a departure from both bands with BULLET UNION (from England, by the way) cranking out two tracks of noisy rock that has me thinking of a cross between a lesser DRIVE LIKE JEHU and something akin to THREE PENNY OPERA or THIS MACHINE KILLS. The guitar work—though quite good—is clearly influenced by something John Reis, and likewise, the songs themselves take on many of the orthodoxies that made many JEHU and HOT SNAKES classics. The vocals, being both screamed and spoken, seem to resemble something a bit more "90s hardcore" to me, making me think of the bands also mentioned above. A solid debut single. (SP)

(Jealous, www.jealousrecords.com)





BURDEN – "If You Don't Stand For Something…" LP

BURDEN who is from Vancouver, Canada blow through some fast and aggressive straight-edge hardcore that obviously owes a lot to bands like POWERHOUSE and STRIFE. Even though it sounds slightly overproduced, I still thought that it was a pretty good release. Pick it up and practice your jumps and fingerpoints within the comfort of your own room. (RC)
(Dead Serious, Helenenanlage3, 66299, Friedrichsthal, GERMANY, www.deadserious.de)

BURDEN – "With Every Step Forward" EP

I never was into BANE. To me BANE were always that transition band into hardcore much like NOFX was for kids that eventually got into the punk scene. This is pretty much what I expected from BURDEN's slick full color layout and fold over packaging. However, I wasn't expecting it to be this good. BURDEN play a style of hardcore that seems to be all the rage right now. They blend fast hardcore verses with moshcore breakdowns and transitions. I was going to compare this to BANE, but nowadays people are just calling this "modern hardcore." Blurry photos aside, this impressive Vancovuer straight edge band is definitely competent enough to fit on the Bridge 9 Records roster. The production is top notch, and even though I can't stand the way the bass sounds, I am sure I am in the minority for fans of this style of hardcore. If you wish CHAMPION was tougher sounding, or that TERROR had guitar octaves and arpeggios, then you'll love BURDEN. (CC)
(Dead Serious, Helenenanlage3, 66299, Friedrichsthal, GERMANY, www.deadserious.de)

BURY THE LIVING / EVIL ARMY – "Clean Cut, Paralyzed, and Heroic" split EP

BURY THE LIVING are good Memphis hardcore punk. Kinda TRAGEDY without the over-production. Good thrash breakdowns. Blazingly fast guitar walking. Lyrics on unusual, but important topics. EVIL ARMY… evil! Songs about killing and being an insane murdering fuck. Face value, it's standard thrash, but the unique vocal patterns for sure make this band stand out. Buy this record. Hear a band who will soon be incredible (BURY THE LIVING) and one band (EVIL ARMY) who represents the horror of human thought. (JA)
(Soul Is Cheap, PO Box 11552, Memphis, TN 38111)

BROKEN BOTTLES – "In The Bottles" LP

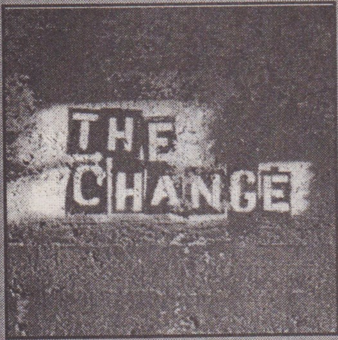
Catchy anthemic punk with a Long Beach/Hostage/Alive! Records sound. I like these guys, I've reviewed an EP by them before, they (like the good old US BOMBS before them) take 1977 and add heap of LA snot and a heap of good old American pop punk tuneage. Slow down SCREECHING WEASEL, add some smack and eyeliner, you get the BROKEN BOTTLES. (AD)
(TKO, 3126 W.Cary St. #303, Richmond, VA 23221)

C.D.S. – "An American Gothic" EP

A good hardcore punk record, here. They play a style of melodic hardcore punk that combines elements of all different styles of punk. In the verses I hear 7 SECONDS and DISCHARGE, but they use a lot of HUSKER DU chords. Besides these, they have a heavier side but not in a way that makes you think they have been listening to anything post-1990. They also have one or two youth crew-sounding breakdowns, which sound funny with a British accent. This is a good record, for sure. Really nice simple art, too, with all the personal/political lyrics printed. Cool. (WR)
(Peter Bower, PO Box 132, Leeds, LS6 2RR, ENGLAND, peterbower@alcoholic.co.uk)

CAPTAIN 9's – "If This Is Heaven / Hubba-Hubba!"

This record came out over ten years ago, I'm not quite sure why it's been re-released… oh, yeah! Because it's fucking brilliant!! Tom Hutchinson is perhaps one of the most underrated song writers in California. Seriously, the man has this knack for writing the perfect hook and some classic lines, why the CAPTAIN 9's and KNOCKOFFS never took over the world will always be one of life's greatest mysteries. Originally formed in some hick town in Pennsylvania as CAPTAIN 9 & THE KNICKERBACKER TRIO the band eventually relocated to variously places with the hick town of Stockton, California being their home base for quite a while. They released a slew of EPs and one LP on Rip Off that featured some of the best tunes off of the EPs. After a while the band called it quits and Tom moved to Sacramento and started the KNOCKOFFS, but that's another story all together. For their time I'd say CAPTAIN 9's rivaled the South City bands in greatness if not popularity. Twangy garage punk catchier than most bands in the genre. I highly recommend picking up a copy of this record. And with that being said, I wonder if Tom got paid for the repress? (BM)
(Sack O'Shit, PO Box 308, Kankakee, IL 60901)



CARPETTES – "Live At Last Tokyo 2003" LP

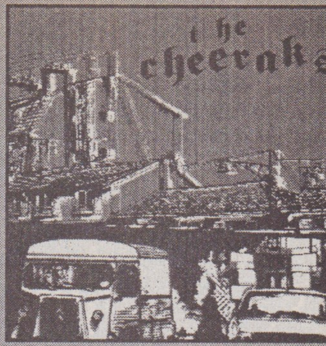
An energized live set from these reunited popsters circa 1980. Aided by a tougher guitar sound (I would guess Marshall 100), this sounds quite different from their original more mod-ish sound. Still a tight rocking set for CARPETTES completists. (RL)
(Last Years Youth, lastyearsyouth@web.de)

THE CHANGE – "Up to You" CD

This is really good. As soon the vocals kicked in I immediately thought of VERBAL ASSAULT. Seriously, if VERBAL ASSAULT were around today they might sound like THE CHANGE. If you like your hardcore melodic with a hint of modern Swedish rock, then check this band out. (CC)
(Fight Fire with Fire, PO box 254, Stuyvesant Falls, NY, 12174)

CHEERAKS – "Are No.1" EP

CHEERAKS are a noisy lo-fi swampy sounding trio from Germany (or maybe France). Four tacks listed here are really just two. "Cheeraks are no. 1" is a JON SPENCER BLUES EXPLOSION-like intro which deconstructs and turns into "No Mercy" an in the red and trashy, overblown ripper with a beautiful zapped-out ending. The song doesn't end. it stops. On the flip you have "Honey" a LINK WRAY sounding bluesy, boozy instrumental, followed by a throwaway no-fi 30 second "Heaven" with lazy guitar strumming and nice mouth harp. Kind of neat. (RR) (Yakisana 51, rue Renaudel – 76 100 Rouen, FRANCE)



THE CHEEPS – CD

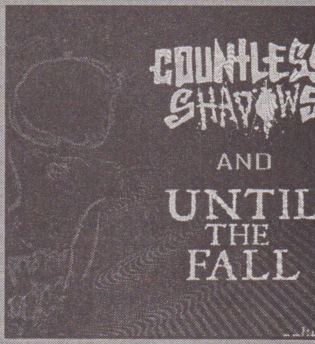
This should have been in the last issue, it also should have been in my top ten of last year, but that's another story. Anyhow, thanks to the generosity of one of these Bellingham band members, it finally gets to be reviewed. So what we got, well a hell of a lot truth be told, a full on garage rocker that tends to thankfully stray from the confines usually expect from this genre. Expect the straight up approach once championed by early NEW BOMB TURKS to be messed around with some unexpected riff-idge usually associated with stoner rockers such as FEDERATION X, more twisting and turning in the form of a sinister undertone as mastered by those lovable creeps THE SPITS, some full on AC/DC-ing and the use of a trumpet with out a trace of irony. The best garage punk record since *Destroy Oh Boy*. Rock on (SD)
(Slovenly, PO Box 204, Reno, NV 89504. www.slovenly.com)

COMMANDOS – "Fight To Win" LP

Ahhhh, Rave Up Records. Always a hit or miss situation, if you ask me. As far as this series goes, this is one of the better installments, if only because there is zero live material. That's right: it's all studio junk from these 1978-1983 Worcester, MA no-goods. Young, drunk and forgettable punk. Strangely though, I'm damn glad that it's available. I have problems. (MC)
(Rave-Up, Via Castracane 3, 00176 Roma, ITALY)

CONATION - "Troubled Waters and Fortresses" CD

If YOU AND I hadn't broken up, this is what I feel like they'd be sounding like now. Australia's CONATION deliver six tracks of intense, politically fueled, emotional hardcore that have a lot more life to them than most of the tired emo garbage coming out these days. When they play fast, they play FAST. I love it... But when they go emo, they go *way* emo. It's not so hot… I have to admit that they pull it off well, but the piano, violin, and Tori Amos vocals are just ridiculous. I feel like I'm stuck inside an episode of Rainbow Bright. (VH)
(Deplorable, PO Box 430, Newtown, NSW 2042, AUSTRALIA)



COUNTLESS SHADOWS / UNTIL THE FALL - split CD

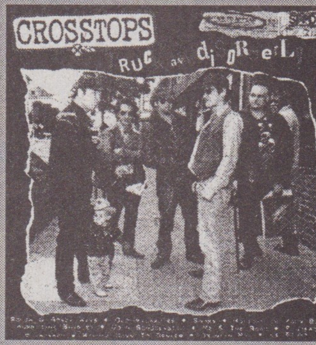
The packaging on this was so atrocious that I was certain this would be horrific metalcore. Well, that wasn't completely true. COUNTLESS SHADOWS definitely plays predominately metallic hardcore with gruff screams with personal lyrics. Mike Thorn kinda chuckled and said it sounded like CATHARSIS. At first, I thought UNTIL THE FALL sounded kinda like AUS ROTTEN with blunt political lyrics sung by a vocalist that you can understand. But then the music was overcome by more metalcore riffage and double bass too. However, if you're into that kinda stuff, these bands seem really well intentioned. There is no jock stuff here, just folks that want to see an end to oppression and war like the rest of us. (ZM)
(High Fidelity, PO Box 1071, Grover Beach, CA 93483)

THE CRAMPS – Fetischiii Live In France 1980

A no-brainer review (my specialty): you know better than I whether you need or want a decent quality bootleg (only 15% of the sound is tape hiss, though you can't hear the bass at all—get it?) of a 1980 Cramps show. Act accordingly. (DD)
(Ghoul-ash, Dracula Mansion, Transylvania)

CROPKNOX – "Rock And Rot" CD

More UK82 worship from our spikey pals at Punkcore, this time from our very own SF youngsters CROPKNOX, and as with most stuff from this label, it smokes. What I like about this band (and a lot of the bands playing this style these days) is that they shy away from the plodding dirge of bands like RABID, DISRUPTERS, etc., and take the anthemic punk attack of ONE WAY SYSTEM, FITS, etc., and add some real tunes and musicianship (and in this case some decent anti-state lyrics). If you need some more recent references, think VIRUS or LOWER CLASS BRATS. Tacked on the end of this disc is a cover of "East Of Dachau" by the UNDERDOGS (one of the later Riot City releases) which is one of my all time fave UK releases…their version ain't half bad either—so that alone gets a huge thumbs up. Even without that icing on the punk rock cake, this is a great release. (TB)
(Punkcore, PO Box 916, Middle Island, NY 11953)

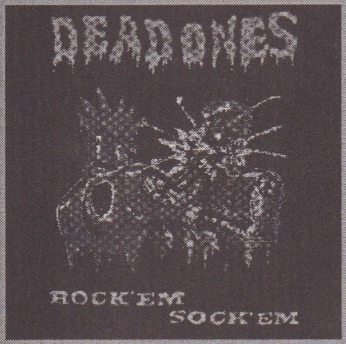


CROSSTOPS – "Truck and Disorderly" CD

The man who assigns review CDs hates me. Country punk, this be. Ay. Once there existed TEX AND THE HORSEHEADS and MEAT PUPPETS, among others, who created "cowpunk." Cowpunk good. CROSSTOPS suck. Bad country, crap rock, and used up punk do not an acceptable band make. (JA)
(Malt Soda, PO Box 7611, Chandler, AZ 85246)

DANDARE – "Uncritical Mass" CD

DANDARE play some tight-ass hardcore punk and they are from the Netherlands. They blow through nine songs of fast and aggressive hardcore that clock in less than 14 minutes. They mix together old school elements with a modern approach, and it comes off quite nicely. Apparently they have been around for many years, but in all honesty, this is the first I have ever heard of them. A damn fine release! (RC)
(Phallus Bob, c/o James Koppert & Ryan York, Flat 4 / Trafalgar Square, Scarborough, North Yorkshire, Y012 7PY UK)



DEAD ONES – "Rock' em, sock'em" CD

You know the rock and punk of this. DEAD BOYS meets PAGANS meets not as good as all that. These bands who play an almost pre-punk style of rolling power rock are sad to review, cuz you just know that they tear it up live. This CD, however, is lifeless and formulaic. (JA)
(no address)

DEADSURE – "From Your Head To Your Sacrum" – CDEP

Six songs of over-produced MTV-Emo (pronounced "EMTEE-VEEMOE"). NO IDEA puts out a lot of stuff of this genre, but this time they've gone too far. I know it's a subjective term, but this, my friends, is just not punk…well, unless you thought TOOL was punk. Save your money. (AS)
(No Idea, PO Box 14636, Gainsville, FL, 32604, www.noidearecords.com)

DECEASED – "Rotten to the Core" CD

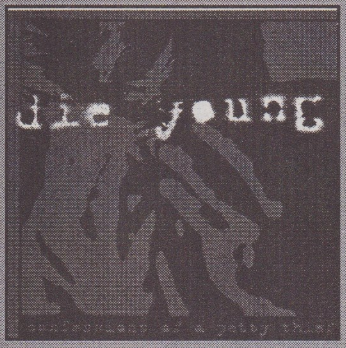
DECEASED has put forth a CD of16 metalized covers of classic punk songs by the greats like RAW POWER, VERBAL ABUSE, DEAD KENNEDYS, etc. Most of the tracks were entertaining to listen to once and their cover of the CRO-MAGS' "World Peace" was downright good. So if you were to ask me, "Negative Tom, ruler of all things totally awesome, should I pay my hard earned cash for a CD of a metal band playing metallic versions of classic punk songs?" I would tell you to answer your own question. (NT)
(Malt Soda, PO Box 7611, Chandler, AZ 85246)

DESCENDENTS – "'Merican" EP

This band was great and important twenty years ago. Then, most of them became ALL and tried to pimp themselves to majors. No trust them. This record is a new release and sounds just like shitty BAD RELIGION, nothing like DESCENDENTS. It is at least anti-American, but how many poser mall punks give a shit what a band says? Ignore this band. (JA)
(Fat Wreck Chords, PO Box 193690, San Francisco, CA 94119-3690)

DIESTINKIN – "H.M.F.U." EP

Die stinkin' or live trying. It's a deep-south pop punk thing with tunes about how they love dope, skating tough ("skating is the only thing that I like to go, if they don't like it then hey man, fuck you.") That kinda thing. "Can't Help It" and "Dropout" are kinda catchy in their own way. The DIESTINKIN would probably benefit from a little more noise in their sound—it's a bit clean for this kinda mid-tempo sterf. (JH)
(2037 W. Carol Cir, West Palm Beach, FL 33415. diestinkin.com



DIE YOUNG – "Confessions of A Petty Thief" EP

This is some tough angry hardcore from Texas. Loud crunchy guitar riffs and harsh growling vocals dominate the soundscape here. They stick with a fast pace and stay away from the slow monster breakdowns. Fans of bands like TERROR should definitely take note. (RC)
(Immigrant Sun, PO Box 150711, Brooklyn, NY 11215)

DIRTFARM – "Drown Your Face" – 10"

Alright, this record had me interested at first with its post-punk sort of melodic WIRE mixed with LEATHERFACE sound. I was diggin it …then it slipped into this whiney sappy pappy crap that just plain irritated me; I guess you'd say how punk, right? Wrong, it sucked, I was tricked, lured in with the good stuff then forced to listen to that dribble. Yuck!!! Then on the flip side it picks up again sounding decent again, I'm not falling for it again guys. Nice try. Confusing, but fuck, if a band has it in 'em to put bullshit like that second song on a record; it makes me question the whole damn thing. (AS)
(Spirit of 76 / Disaster Area, Tweehoernweg 61, D-26316 Varel, GERMANY)

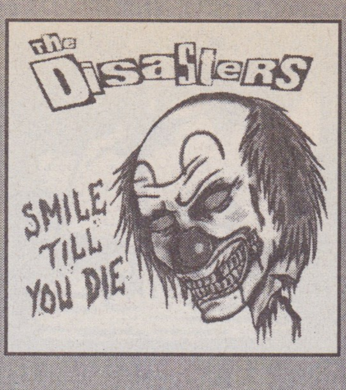
THE DISASTERS – "Smile Till You Die" EP

This is good. It's not great, it's not going to change the world, but it's good. It's catchy—it's singalong catchy, times—and it's pretty easy to listen to. It's got the male/female competing vocals that always seem to get me to bite. Sometimes I like this sort of thing. Other times I think that punk rock should be a little more aggressive and challenging. Today I like it enough to include it in my Top 10 list. Congratulations, you're going to Hollywood. (KK)
(Campary c/o A. Heitmann, Fortunastr. 18, 40235 Düsseldorf, GERMANY, campary-rec@web.de)

DISKORDS – "Blame It On The Kids" LP

This band is simply amazing. After two great 7" and one split EP the DISKORDS have followed it up with one great full length of HEARTBREAKERS inspired rock. I guess you have to do something once most of the band members turn fourteen. After all soon the DISKORDS won't need their parents to drive them

to shows and chaperone them on tour. I just hope high school doesn't tear this band apart. Oh yeah, the vinyl comes with an extra song. (JF)
(Vinyl Warning, PO Box 2991, Portland, OR 97208)



DISKORDS – "Pink Palace" EP

I'm disappointed *Pink Palace* isn't printed on pink vinyl, but I'm obviously going to have to let that one *go*. It's ruff stuff with lyrics about listening to records and what have you. The DISKORDS obey the regular hard-fast-rules-kill-yer-classmates kinda noise complete with a little spoken word-stand-up moment about mean teachers and kids with attitude problems. (JH)
(Dirtnap, PO Box 21249, Seattle, WA 98111)

DYSTOPIA – "The Aftermath" CD

I really dig DYSTOPIA. I listen to them frequently (great music to drive to). Angular hardcore, psychedelic-edged, anarcho-inspired, misanthropic crust. Heavy, dis-jointed, crushing, harsh, intelligent, visceral, legendary—DYSTOPIA sound like no one else but DYSTOPIA and no one else sounds like them—they stand in a ruling class all their own. This is a collection, from the years 1995-1997, of the *Backstabber* EP, the *Aftermath* EP, and their split with SKAVEN, including my favorite song by them, "Anger Brought By Disease," and the split with SUFFERING LUNA. This is the European-pressed version of this and if you don't have it yet (tsk) then now is the time to add this classic feel-bad hit of the 90s to your collection. My official first No-Brainer of the year: Recommended. (WM)
(Throne, PO Box 8035, 33200 Gijon, SPAIN, www.thronerecords.com)

THE EAST BAY CHASERS – "It Came From The East Bay" EP

The CHASERS blast you with a wall of distorted guitars, a head bobbing beat and some crazy vocals that sound similar to Perry Farrell of JANE'S ADDICTION. Don't take it wrong, this is like Perry Farrell singing in a good band. Actually, I like this single better than their debut CD. It has better art, better production and a better performance. The only problem is that it's only two songs. Now I really gotta check out their new six song *Johnny is a Junky* EP. (HM)
(Five & Dime, PO Box 23441, Oakland, CA 94623, www.eastbaychasers.com)

EAT THE LIVING – "Eat the Living" CD

Evil witch-burning vox over raging metallic death heaviness, and evidence of some power-violence appreciation, with a rudimentary punk rawness and the dragging crush of bloodied damage not far from the Life Is Abuse label style. LUDICRA fans should take some note. Four songs, at ten metallic minutes, on a CD would've made for a better 7" on delicious tasting vinyl—not as good as the taste of the living, though, I'm sure. (WM)
(ETL c/o Sean Vahle, 10153 1/2 Riveside Dr. #197, Toluca Lake, CA 91602, www.eattheliving.com)

EMPIRE – "Expensive Sound" CD

The CD reissue of the post GENERATION X band from GEN X's guitar and drummer Derwood and Laff. Originally released in 1981, this band featured a post punk-ish sound with it's reverb guitar sound and some strong basic rhythm sounds. I always liked this record, but over the years it has become quite an influential sound. Dare I say roots of emo somehow? Twenty two tracks in all. A must for GENERATION X completists! (RL)
($12 ppd., PPP, PO Box 211, Dunn Loring, VA 22027)

ENDANGERED FECES – "Ass For It By Name… " CD

Wow! What a buncha dunderheads. These FECES have some incredibly absurd and goofy lyrics, and they know how to back it up with some spirited melodic punk. I guess I'd say they're like a perverse BAD RELIGION with diarrhea at a toilet paper war. (HM)
(Under The Volcano, PO Box 236, Nesconset, NY 11767, www.endangered-feces.com)

EVERYBODY'S ENEMY – "I Am Legend" EP

A punk-hardcore band from Japan, who shows little to zero signs of being a Japanese punk band. Their songs sound like a sloppier, less produced version of old AFI or old LINK 80. It is pretty bland and unmemorable. Doesn't do anything for me. Pretty simple black and white art with pictures of buildings and people, stuff. Probably meant to be symbolic of something, but I don't know if anyone knew what it was supposed to symbolize. Ok, then. (WR)
(Sick of Talk, PO Box 9723, Reno, NV 89507, www.sickoftalk.com)

EXFORK – "A Cure For The Disease Called Man…" LP

Pummeling drums and crunchy distort rhythms, noise-edged structures, scratchy throated and effected vocals, reminiscent to me of a much much more restrained COMBATWOUNDEDVETERAN, or a more focused BUCKETFUL OF TEETH, or the ORCHID or… The engineer was Billy Anderson, of NEUROSIS, UNSANE, MELVINS, etc, recording fame, known for some thick and heavy production. If any of the above groups you feel kinship with then EXFORK would be up your alley, maybe drinking and smoking and making a bunch of noise, damned be the neighbors. The drummer of TOYS THAT KILL drives this

groups' tempo, if you're keeping score. (WM)
(Geykido Comet, PO Box 3806, Fulllerton, CA 92834, www gcrecords.com)

FALLEN – "Eight Ways of Domination" LP

Heavy, metallic hardcore ala-UNBROKEN from the Basque area of Spain. The songs are fairly technical with a few different vocalists mixing things up quite a bit. However, I'm not really a fan of the melodic singing bits as they seem to detract from the heaviness of many of the songs. The musicianship though is quite good, and the lyrics are printed in both English and Spanish. I could imagine these guys being really good live. (SP)
(In My Heart Empire, c/o Alberto de las Heras, C/ Urdibai 4, 4-4C., 48920 Portugalete (Bizkaia) SPAIN, inmyheartempire@hotmail.com, www.diasdejuventud.tk)

FALLEN – "Eight Ways Of Domination" CD

Crunchy metalcore from Spain much akin to what I recall UNBROKEN sounding like… or was it INDECISION. Or was It JESUIT—all those metal bands end up as a big audio blur to me. Actually they sound dead-on like this band CHANNEL from Virginia I saw once, 'cept these Iberian punks do that lame-o sing song thing that bands like POISON THE WELL do, and so I bid this CD adieu! Never to return to my CD, nor fill my ears with your sonic atrocities. Too bad, cause I'm down with their politics, oh well—ciao, baby! (MT)
(Dias De Juventud, Praza Rosalía De Castro, Bloque 1-2B, 363650 Nigra (Pontevedra) SPAIN, www.diasde-juventud.tk)

FALLOUTS – "Summertime" CD

This band has always been kind of hit or miss with me. Some of their songs are fucking incredible and some of their songs leave me limp and reaching for the stop button. This doesn't really change my opinion of them, but it doesn't sound like what I'm used to either. A lot less frantic and punk and more 60s jangly beat. It's not bad, it's not great but it will probably grow on me. It's such a clean sounding and mid tempo record and I was expecting "Oi Canada!" maybe that was my fault. (BM)
(Estrus, PO Box 2125 Bellingham, WA, 98227)

THE FATALS – "Angry" EP

My hell! This is one noisy French band. Remember how all your friends complained that TEENGENERATE's recordings were too hard to listen to, but you could get enough of them? Well, allow me to introduce you to THE FATALS. Under all that noise are some cool tunes with (I think) some nice fuck-off attitude to go along with it. Great stuff. (CK)
(Nasty Product, c/o Marc Lignon, 68 Rue Achille Viadieu, 31400 Toulouse, France, love.escalator@voila.fr)

FEUD – "Battling Bastards of Freedom" CD

It always bums me out a little when I see an epitaph on a CD before I even listen to it. It's worse when you know the band was good. FEUD were a fast straight edge political youth crew band from the Philippines that called it quits in 2003. Most of their sixteen songs are in English, with a few in Tagalog. Topics range from the commercialization of punk to vegetarianism. They even do something I have never heard another band do: cover NATIONS ON FIRE. This is a co-release from multiple labels, but if you like most of the stuff that 625 puts out, then you will definitely dig this. (CC)
(T4C, Po Box 3900, CPO Manila 1000, PHILIPPINES)

FLAKES – "Talk About You" EP

The FLAKES are a San Francisco garage band made up of a bunch of guys who were in other San Francisco garage bands. They play a lot here in SF and are probably one of my favorite local bands. The music is pure 60s garage with bluesy undertones and the band has an authentic 60s vibe all the way down to their Prince Valiant haircuts. (DP)
(Dollar)

FUCKED UP – "Dance Of The Dead / Zezozose"

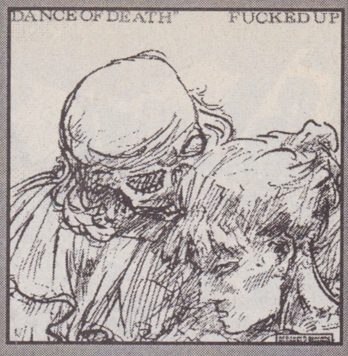
Those young Canadians way up there in Toronto are sounding more and more like a Boston '82 hardcore act than the SPAZM 151 clones I once had them pegged for. Getting bigger and better with every release, coming off as heavy mix of NEGATIVE APPROACH, early SLAPSHOT, POISON IDEA and, Christ, even elements of some off that old good time dodgy English oi. A leftist stance sets them apart from the influences noted. Now it's just up to the kids to stop worshipping false idols and prevent more potential kings of punk from slipping under the radar screen. (SD)
(Deranged, PO Box 543, Station P Toronto, ON M5S 2TI, CANADA)

FUNERAL SHOCK – "Dead Scene$ter" EP

FUNERAL SHOCK comes up with four charging, aggressive tunes that recall medium-tempo mid-80s Boston HC married with rough, earthy vocals. The stinging guitars are always on the edge of spewing feedback, and I liked the change of pace tempos in "Dead Scene$ter." Basic production works to the band's advantage here. Solid from start to finish. (SS)
(Controlled by Plague, PO Box 22641, San Francisco, CA 94122)

GAUGE MEANS NOTHING – "The Absent Trail of an Echo and My Future..." LP

With tunes from the other side of the Pacific (Japan to be exact), GAUGE MEANS NOTHING is alllll over the place. On this melodic-as-fuck LP, there are keyboards, bells/chimes, metal guitar parts, piano interludes, feedback, blast beats, screaming, screeching, shouting, and singing. I don't think I have ever heard so many different kinds of vocals on a record. There are both sung and screechy hiiiiigh-pitched female vocals, male screams/yells, the occasional growl and at one point it sounds like everyone is mimicking the melody with "oooohs" behind the main screamer. Though there is a lot going on vocally and with the keyboards, the music is, for the most part, pretty straightforward emotional hardcore kinda like a faster paced, less epic ENVY. This is an interesting album for sure. Only 500 were pressed, so get your hands on this black marbled vinyl and look out for future Japanese hardcore releases from I've Come For Your Children. (ZM)
(I've Come For Your Children, 252 Barker Rd, Nashville, TN 37214)



GET DOWN – "Unlimited Nights And Weekends" - EP

Woah, this is a rad release. The GET DOWN are a SWIZ cover band! ...Well not really, they wrote their own songs, but they just sound exactly like SWIZ songs. Yeah so, they blatantly bit off SWIZ—but I say, who cares this record rules! Get you some. (AS)
(Painkiller, 8 Burney St Apt #1, Roxbury, MA 02120, www.painkillers.com)

GEWOHNHEITSTRINKER – "1984" LP

This German. I shouldn't expect translated lyrics, but I still wish they were. These skinhead "bootboys" play an oi style of punk that also becomes SUICIDAL SUPERMARKET TROLLEYS at times. They are against nationalism yet display "pride-power-passion-unity" tattoos. Sorry, I just can't recommend skinhead bands. I am scared of them and often in my life have fought them. A tattoo which says "power?" (JA)
(Scumfuck Mucke, PSF 100709, 46527 Dinslaken, GERMANY)

GHETTO WAYS – LP

I think I just shat my self. Alien Snatch once again manages to amaze me and soil my drawers. Way more low budget and no-fi than I've come to associate with the label, but what the hell do I know. Bare bones rock and roll straight out of NY brought to you by three kids who know a thing or two about what makes a good garage record. It's got the hooks, the soul and the attitude. The female/male vocal switching really keep the ball rolling and keep things fresh. Fans of The SPACESHITS, DEL GATORS and LITTLE KILLERS will probably flip their lids. (BM)
(Alien Snatch, Moerikeweg 1-744199 U-Bach, GERMANY, www.aliensnatch.de)

GOOBER PATROL – "Songs That Were Too Shit For Fat" CD

A collection of comp, splits, and various other recordings from these brit yucksters. Always dishing out a decent pop punk tune. These vets can be lumped in with TRAVIS CUT and a Crackle band or two. (RL)
(Them's Good, PO Box 8, Corby, Northamptonshire, NN17 2XZ, UNITED KINGDOM)

GORE BEYOND NECROPSY – "Wild and Frantic Rock 'n' Roll Special!" EP

This makes me laugh out loud. GORE BEYOND NECROPSY doing a 7" of old rock and roll covers that they completely obliterate. Jesus fucking Christ, I never thought a HENDRIX song could be punk until now. This is absolutely ridiculous in the best way imaginable. The art puts the whole thing over the top with crude full color psychedelic freak-out cartoons. (NT)
(HG Fact, 105 Nakano Shinbashi-m, 2-7-15 Yayoi-cho, Nakano, Tokyo, 164-0013, JAPAN)

GUITARRIA - "A 125 Por Hora" CD

Fast and loose punk rawk outta Brazil, not unlike a tamer REATARDS or MOTARDS, but sung in Portuguese. I've always had a soft spot for this kind of mayhem and this CD ain't no slouch. (TB)
(Laja, Caixa Postal 25.519, Vila Velha, ESCEP 29102-973, BRASIL)

HARRIS – "New Morning Pulse" CD

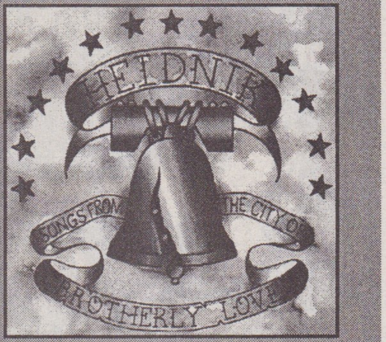
Great punky pop with indie and emo overtones along the ways of J CHURCH, SUPERCHUNK, and PEE. Six songs that have that feel good vibe with tension filled lyrics. A pleasant surprise. (RL)
(Urinine, PO Box 413903, Kansas City, MO 64141)

HARUM SCARUM – "The Last Light" LP

Seven songs of anthemic melodic punk with gruff yet emotive female vocals. Sort of like the singer from THIS IS MY FIST playing with LEATHERFACE. Sounds good, doesn't it? Actually Mike just pointed out that they sound just like JOYCE MCKINNEY EXPERIENCE which is a pretty spot-on comparison. DAN or SOFAHEAD would work too. (AM)
(Partners In Crime, PO Box 11787, Portland, OR 97211)

HEADBANGERS – "Headbangers" EP

I know nothing about this band. The have no records in the collection and I'm totally confused. They do a WIRE cover, they appear to be from Bremen and recorded this in 1978. It's primitive, garagey punk that borrows heavily from Brit bands of the time same time—think more GROUT than CLASH though. Quick, jangley and pogo-y punk rock with saxophone flutters akin to X-RAY SPEX with vocals snapped out



in quickstep to the music in that Germanic cadence. Pretty cool little single. (MT)
(Phonomenal, www.phonomenal.de)

HEIDNIK – "Songs From the City of Brotherly Love" CD

Aside from the Philly reference, this just says East Coast to me, all over it. I just know that these dudes are all big and burly, covered in tattoos (spider webs on their elbows, you just know). HEIDNIK, in my opinion, plays slightly above average, hardcore metal-punk with gruff, burly vocals that I expect of the East Coast. They do have an interesting drummer and some well-worked rhythmic riffage, if you were so inclined to appreciate, and that I know is popular with the big, burly, tattooed crowd, particularly those from the East Coast. As an aside, they are named after a severely deranged woman-hating/torturing/killer from the late 80s Philadelphia. Why? 'Cuz it's shocking. They're also endorsed by an indie clothing producer. The state of the youth today. (WM)
(Watch The City Burn, 717 Brighton St., Philedelphia, PA 19111, www.watchthecityburn.com)

HELLSHOCK – "Arrows To The Poor" EP

Oh dear, will the wimpy intro to this song ever end? Ahhhh, finally the music kicks in. What you'll hear is some dark and thunderous mid-tempo crustcore from Portland. Thick crunchy distortion and deep growling vocals take command, while a layer of metallic riffs gives the music some flare. Sounds like some long lost release from the Earache or Peaceville back catalogs. Not too shabby! (RC)
(Whispers In Darkness, PO Box 40113, Portland, OR 97240-0113)

HENRY FIAT'S OPEN SORE – "The Parallel Universe Of…" LP

In perfect world, in my humble opinion, there would be no cops, cookies wouldn't make you fat (though love still probably would), everyone would wear pants, there would be no wars, George Bush would be the name of the guy who pays me for the privilege of cleaning my toilet, everyone would realize that England is a place to hate, and HENRY FIAT'S OPEN SORE would be huge. I mean really why aren't they? This record rules from start to finish—garage rockers, listen, you should be playing at *least* this fast; hardcores your records should sound at *least* this raw and vicious. Tons of catchy tunes, totally funny lyrics, tons of snot, one anti-McDonalds song (for you anarcho-punx who like smashing shit—I too like the sound when I break the glass), one random reference to a "Swedish penis" (for you garage rockers who don't give a shit about nothing and enjoy *Horizontal Action's* version of combining rock and porn—I mean I like boobs as much as anyone else but…) and hell even one ironic synth track (for the hipsters that stay up till 4 am doing lines of coke like a scene out of a bad 80s stereotype. Hello! Isn't enough that you look like a tool in your Members Only jacket and Rod Stewart haircut? Do you have to do coke too? Instead, make your own meth in your kitchen, stay up for weeks at a time, get pissed, break shit, cut your hair… oh wait this has nothing to do with HENRY FIAT'S OPEN SORE, who are smart dressers and wear their bondage masks even in the shower). How can you go wrong when you combine 60s garage rock's sense of melody with hardcore's velocity? Look at me I'm jumping around the room like a baboon with a lit banana shoved up his ass! I like this that much! If this came out in 1980, most of you would worship it like it was the second coming sweet baby Jesus, or even more-so—big bad baby Jesus. Great, great, great! (MT)
(Raw Deluxe, PO Box 23882, Oakland, CA 94623, www.theerawdeluxe.com)

HEROES & ZEROS – "Wake-up Call" CD

Extremely standard streetpunk from Amsterdam with monotonous tough and gruff vocals and shout-out choruses singing about the same old thing. I'm bored by the third song. (SR)
(KOB, Via N. Cantarane 63/C, 37129 Verona, ITALY, kob@bbk.org)

HIRNSÄULE – "Das Gerät" LP

HIRNSÄULE plays disjointed, generally snotty punk done super DIY. The basic model is early 80s SoCal style, and that's where the band succeeds—they're even a little GERMS-y occasionally. At times they muck around with slower, sing-songy tunes, or just weird noises and shit, and this is just no fun. Also, I must say, the vocals are not doing it for me—they're aggressive, but not compelling. There's too much variety within each song, and not enough over the whole record. On a second listen, it seems like better production might pull the personality out of this a little better. (AC)
(Thomas Lindenbaum, Voxtruper Str. 12, 49082 – Osnabrück, GERMANY, lindeselbst@gmx.de)

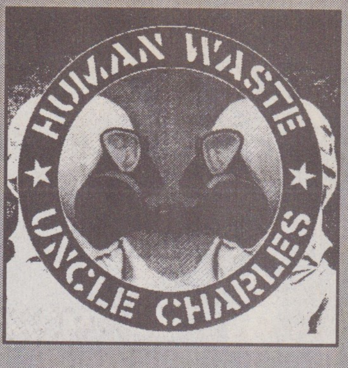
HOW WE LOST THE WAR – "Beacon" EP

Fast, reckless songs with an undercurrent of thrash metal following every twist and turn. They occasionally slow things down and pack in the angry riffs, but it generally flies by pretty quick. The vocals are low droning screams that almost seem to be a step behind the music. These tunes are pretty standard, if you ask me. (RC)
($4 ppd: 341a 21st St, Apt.1F, Brooklyn, NY 11215, howwelostthewar@hotmail.com)

HUMAN WASTE / UNCLE CHARLES – split EP

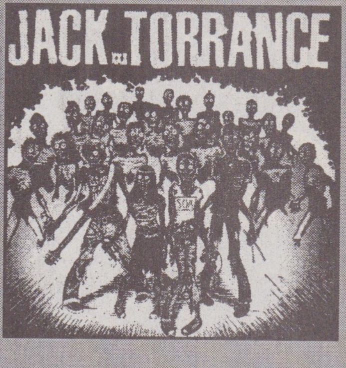
The "Swedish Onslaught Series Vol. 1" on the back cover pretty much sums it up. Ostersund's UNCLE CHARLES tear through six songs of crusty hardcore, while HUMAN WASTE pound out three tracks of thick, heavy, guitar driven crust that's not nearly as straight forward or "punk" as I remember some of their other records being. I thought their *I Vantan Pa Socialbidraget* EP was great, but these songs don't hit me as hard. As a whole, this record falls short of an "onslaught" and I'd say both bands earlier EPs had a lot

more energy and intensity to them. But if you're looking for a taste of a modern Swedish sound that isn't mimicking 80s American HC, this is worth checking out. (VH)
(Regression c/o Jonathan Macfariane, Skylvagen 59, 831 76 Ostersund, SWEDEN, www.regression.cjb.net)



JACK TORRANCE – "Jack Torrance" EP

Spanish youngsters digging into a retro sound. A sped-up, less gloomy CAPITOL PUNISHMENT or NOTA comes to mind. Not quite hardcore, but gruff enough and punk enough to get the pit going. Good record apart from the butchered AVENGERS cover. (TB)
(Mindless Mutant, PO Box 35322, 08029 Barcelona, SPAIN)



KEEN MONKEY WORK – "Slow Pork" CD

Following closely on their amazing 7" on the Needle label from last year is this full length from these Japanese garage punkers who seem to be on the verge of assuming the throne of fast-garage punk vacated by the REGISTRATORS a few years back (are the ACCEL 4 still around? Mike?). On the strength of this debut full-length I would start fitting them for their robes, as this ten-tracker has all the elements that make the grade: garbled vocals, good catchy guitar hooks and a sound that isn't quite "garage," or "1977," or "rawk," it's a little of all three. The track 'Black Shadow Over Me' is an absolute killer, as is a re-recorded version of 'Maniac and Violence' from the EP. The little obi-strip thingie reads "1st album! Killed By Death!." Yeah, gotcha. It also advertises a live show consisting of these guys, the YOUNG ONES and the ZYMOTICS. Err. Let's get rid of Bush now, so that the Fat Years of the 90s can return and plane tickets can go back to super cheap, so that I can then fly to Tokyo for the next gig. Or, they can afford to tour the USA like in the Olden Days. I hear that the SNEEZE are finished with a full length too, gaaaaaah! Someone stateside, license this stuff! Help us Jebus! (RW)
(Waveform, 2-3 Kanda Awajicho, Chiyoda-Ku, Tokyo, 101-0063, JAPAN)

KIDNAPPERS - "Spanish Girls" EP

……kinda TEENGENERATE….kinda…..well, maybe not…..I can't place it….but the singer at times sounds like Dez Cadena….then like Milo……and then he ruins it by throwing in a little Fat Mike…..!!!! …..all three songs here are lo-fi, that's for sure….but there's nothing amazing here…..the huge black-heads I've been finding in my lower back are MUCH more amazing!!!!!!!(SW)
(Zaxxon Virile Action, www.zaxxonvirileaction.com)

KIDNAPPERS – "Spanish Girls" EP

This band is probably one of the best groups around these days. All three members were in the HIGH SCHOOL ROCKERS and after two singles and a split they changed the name and grew into their sound. They're the perfect combination of garage punk and power pop. Fans of The MARKED MEN and FIRESTARTER should check this out. Three tunes, all previously unreleased and one of them is written by Brian Hermosillo from The FEVERS. How can you possibly go wrong here? (BM)
(Zaxxon)

KRAIL – "Infernale" 2xEP

The label's called Spirit Of '76, but it should really be Spirit of '93, as that's the time period this band seems to reside in. Sort of "in-betweemo" (i.e. well after emo started in DC but before it turned into the mainstream monster it is today, like BOB TILTON) mixed with NOMEANSNO. Rock-solid and tight as Jello's wallet, like most German stuff. Get on it. (AM)
(Spirit Of '76, Tweehörnerweg 61, D-26316 Varel, GERMANY; disaster_area@t-online.de)

KYLESA – "No Ending" 7"/CDEP

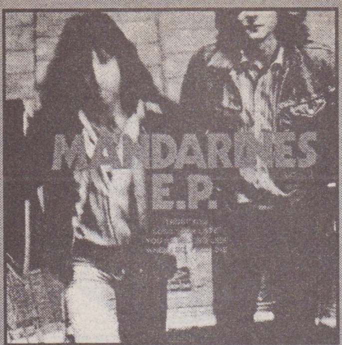
It is hard to compare KYLESA to any one band, so I won't. It is dark, metallic, bleak, angry music that borrows from all sorts of influences and fits perfectly among the styles of the other Prank Records bands. KYLESA's recordings are amazing if nothing else because of the intricate songs and dynamics that have a real hard time showing through when played live. The 7" has two songs while the CD has two bonus tracks (one of which is a NAUSEA cover) and some bonus computer-only goodies. (NT)
(Prank, PO Box 410892, San Francisco CA 94141-0892)

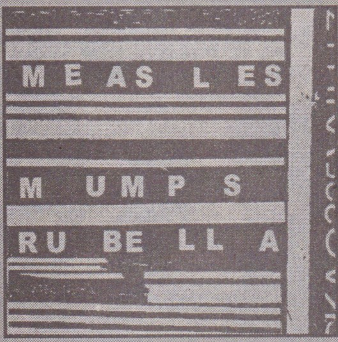
THE LAST MILE – "Designed to Compensate the Lack of Intrinsic Motivation" EP

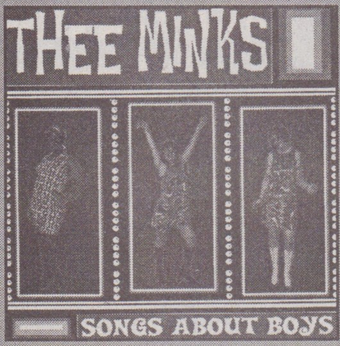
Heavy, mid-paced, and brooding hardcore from the Netherlands. This EP is reminiscent of mid-90s Canadian stuff a la ONE EYED GOD PROPHECY mixed with TRAGEDY and a little chugga. This record is made up of mostly growly male vocals with just enough screams so it's not monotonous. The lyrics aren't so well written, but the explanations are worth reading. All in all, this EP by THE LAST MILE is not the most original slab of vinyl ever, but its sincere delivery sets it apart. (ZM)
(Kloosterstraat 50 9717 LG Growingen, NETHERLANDS)

LES MURDERED HOUSEWIVES – "Last Dance With The Golden Dove" LP

Geeky, techy, and screechy grind that bring to mind a much goofier LOCUST . A one-sided concept record detailing the adventures of the angel Mickey and the son of a king, Baalim. Record comes complete with a libretto insert. All the tracks (13 in all) are separated by computer and synth generated foolishness and silly narration. Don't know what to say 'bout this other than fans of this kind of grind will probably appreciate this one. Yellow vinyl and cool screened artwork. (RR)
(Nauscopy, PO Box 141, Lancaster, NH 03584)







THE LITTLE KILLERS / THE DARTFORD RENEGADES – "Think / Off The Hook"

This is the third in a series of 7"s of current garage bands covering the ROLLING STONES. I have been bored with the whole tribute thing (no matter what lame band it is) for quite some time, but it's already exists so there is nothing I can do about it now. THE LITTLE KILLERS do "Think." They have an amazing style on record. It sounds so fresh and rockin'. This is as good as anything on their wonderful LP. THE DARTFORD RENEGADES do "Off The Hook." They have a more laissez-faire style. I'd like them to pick it up a bit. (CK)

(Norton)

LUBRICANTS – "Activated Energy With the Lubricants" LP

Volume 35 of the Rave Up Records *American Lost Punk Rock Nuggets* series. Very little information here about these guys. The recordings date from 1977-1981, 13 songs in all. Mid tempo 1977-influenced punk with a healthy dose of snot. Not groundbreaking or essential by any means, but good fun nonetheless. This seems to me a bit stronger than most I have heard in this series, probably because it's all studio tracks and no live filler. It seems these guys got better with each year, the tracks from 1981 being the best. Nice stuff here. (RR)

(Rave Up, Via Castracane, 3-00176 Roma, ITALY)

MDC – "Millions Of Dead Cops" LP

Reissue of this 80s punk classic on a woo-woo 12" picture disc. This is probably aimed at you collector nerds out there. Ask yourself "Do I really need an MDC picture disc of the *Millions of Dead Cops* LP?" If your answer is yes, then get this, if your answer is no—no big loss. Don't get me wrong, this is a great record, but I'm sure there's a lot less collectible reissues of it out there. Or it's most likely already sitting in the corner of you record collection. (AS)

(Twisted Chords, Reutweg 1a, 76327 Pfinztal, GERMANY, www.twisted-chords.de)

MDC – "Hey Cop!!! If I Had A Face Like Yours…" LP

MDC has always been strong in the subject matter of their songs, here covering police violence, the cost of war, racial unrest…but the vocals are mixed so loud that some of the guitar punch is lost. While the great "Beat Somebody Up" is done more like a classic Brit-style singalong, the remainder of the LP is mostly in a mid to fast-tempo range with a sound that's distinctively MDC. While not up to the standards of their classic debut, this has a number of strong tracks that make it a better than average outing. The front cover of a dog's ass dressed up as a cop is priceless. (SS)

(Twisted Chords, Reutweg 1a, 76327 Pfinztal, GERMANY, www.twisted-chords.de)

MANDARINES - "Trust You" EP

Exact repro of this 1978 Swedish powerpop oddity, and a right charmer it is too. The hit "Trust You" appeared on *Powerpearls 8* and has been a firm favorite of mine since. As with a lot of these obscurities, the other tracks don't quite match up to the big hitter, but in this case the others aren't far behind. The title track is 1:26 long (a perfect length) and is an awesome catchy powerpop number with a UK bent (think some of the poppier N Ireland goods but with more zip)—worthy reissue for sure. (TB)

(no address)

MANIC HISPANIC – "The Menudo Incident" CD

Thanks to BYO, the classic *The Menudo Incident* has resurfaced. This is definitely my favorite of the MANICS' three full-length releases. If you haven't heard MANIC HISPANICS' barrio flavored classic punk covers, pull your head out of your ass and pick this up. (HM)

(BYO, PO Box 67609, Los Angeles, CA 90067, www.byorecords.com, www.manichispanic.net)

MEASLES, MUMPS, RUBELLA – "Zusammen Mit Motown" EP

According to the insert this 'un was recorded by Ian Mackaye *and* Don Zientara. Sheesh. Okay, is it the BAD BRAINS or the UNTOUCHABLES or SLANT 6? Nah, it's a jumpy update on the MAKE UP sans the excruciating vocals. It's got political lyrics, bouncy bass, and breathless vocals. It ain't bad, but it doesn't get me off the fence either. (RW)

(M'alady)

THE MINDS – "Plastic Girls" LP

I listen to this and I picture skinny ties and neon-pink socks. New wave pop complete with keyboard hooks and woah-woah choruses that keep the Northwest kids' toes tapping, I'm sure. THE MINDS play this stuff with so much energy and drive that it's hard not to get dragged along. Nothing life-changing, but if you like poppy, catchy punk, you'll dig this. (AM)

(Alien Snatch, Mörikweg 1, 74199 Untergruppenbach, GERMANY; www.aliensnatch.de)

THEE MINKS – "Songs About Boys" EP

Fuck, I love this record! Girl garage with the perfect mix of fuzz and buzz, great vocals, good songs, pink vinyl. Did I mention that I fucking love this record? (DP)

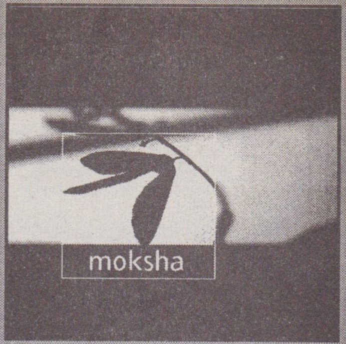
(Steel Cage, Box 29247, Philadelphia, PA 19125, www.steelcagerecords.com)

MODERN LOVERS – "The Original..." LP

Simple, plain and free of irony. *Homely,* you could say. Jonathan Richman and the MODERN LOVERS are probably fifty bucks away from induction into the Rock 'n' Roll Hall of Fame: grandmothers love 'em, they're namedropped and covered more than ever, and pigeon-toed wimps everywhere call 'em their *own.* Jonathan Richman can do what he wants. *The Original* was supposedly taped by Hollywood Svengali during the spring of '72, a fact disputed in the liner notes (fall? Winter? Who knows). I never considered myself a big-time admirer of the MODERN LOVERS though they sound just right to me this evening—it's music by kids for themselves, expressing the kind don't-care forlorn quality that can be irritating if sung by the wrong voice. "She Cracked" and "Walk Up the Street" are instant classics. I could do without Richman's irrepressible angst on tracks like "Gurlfren" and "Dance with Me" *but* the MODERNS were one of the bands responsible for burying the 60s forever and ushering a difficult decade. Good if you have any sort of pop bones in your body. (JH)
(Bomp)

MOKSHA – "The Five Leafs Of Oblivion" CD

Slow chunky metalcore with incredibly brutal vocals that sound like the vocalist's larynx is shredding apart. The band breaks things up by mixing in brief moments of thrashy metal and mellow emo, but they don't stray too far from the twisted path of distorted riffs and growling vocals. Decent, but nothing too exciting. (RC)
(Underhill, PO Box 4220, 31080 Pamplona SPAIN; underhillrcs.com)



MONSTER X – "Indoctrination" CD

Complete discography of these 90s straightedge grinders. Forty plus tracks of drug free brutality. Everything about this record is brutal—the guitars are brutal, the vocals are brutal, their layout is brutal, the singers beard is brutal, but honestly they've really never done that much for me. I honestly just could never get past the Cookie Monster vocals—though it is pretty awesome to hear that vocal style on their cover of NO FOR AN ANSWERS' "Without A Reason." For those with more brutal tastes than my own. (MT)
(Hater Of God, PO Box 666, Troy, NY 12181, www.haterofgod.com)

MOTOSIERRA – "Rules!!" CD

Whoa! The cover has a drawing of woman licking a bloody chainsaw! They have a picture of them sneering on the back cover! They butcher a ROSE TATTOO cover! They have lyrics like "You set me on fire, Suck my desire!" They have a song called "Whiskey And Cocaine!" This totally sucks!!!! (NT)
(www.laja.com.br)

MUDDY FRANKENSTEIN – "Shake at Sodom! / Mantra Jet"

The whole 60s dance/punk/garage punk thing used to kind of annoy me. I can't really explain why, but it has started to grow on me. These Japanese cats recorded this one in 1993 and I think it's a keeper. I like the way they've taken CHUCK BERRY style rock'n'roll and sped it up and put a little life into it. (KK)
(Baylor, 633 Leonard St. #3, Brooklyn, NY 11222)

MYOPIA – CD

Think IGNITE, think scooped out metal guitar tones, think harmony chords, think mid-90s Fat Wreck, think mosh-parts, think quick paced, think GOOD RIDDANCE, don't think I'll really ever listen to this again. Too sterile, too clean and not really fully developed into something neither distinctive nor powerful. (MT)
(13110 Ave M, Chicago, IL 08033, www.surf.to/myopia)

NEVER SURRENDER – CD

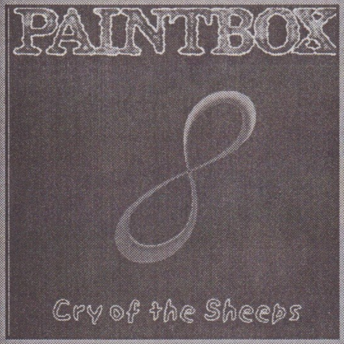
Tough guy, macho, Revelation Records-style metallic hawdcore. Positive "I'll transcend all boundries" lyrics by Porcell. It is what is is and you've heard it before, unless you are lucky. I almost enjoyed the BLITZ cover of the song these guys took their name from. In their hands it almost sounds like a MOTORHEAD song. (RR)
(Fight Fire With Fire, PO Box 254, Stuyvesant Falls, NY 12174)

NEW BLACK – CD

Kind of a throw back to the arty chunky new wave sound with some keyboards and some dance groove at times. Definitely has a cool groove, I'm just torn between ROMEO VOID, SIOUXSIE, or SLANT 6 in the similarity department. A good spin still. (RL)
(Thick, www.newblack.net)

NEW BOMB TURKS – "Pretty Lightning" EP

These folks used to be *the* shit; at least to Tim Yo they were. After putting out a few, a lot of folks seemed to dismiss them. I always kind of liked them and like this one OK, as well. It's a little more polished than their earlier stuff and seems to lack the sense of urgency that set them apart. It's catchy and it's good, but it's also got this sort of 70s rock blues feel to it. It reminds me of the blues oriented (punk) rock that Chiswick was putting out in the UK in the late 70s. (KK)
(Sweet Nothing, no address, www.newbombturks.com)



NO HOPE FOR THE KIDS – "Das Reich / Secret Police"

After one of the best LPs of last year, the follow-up 45 continues to deliver the goods. As with a lot of the incredible stuff coming out of Denmark these days it's hard to categorize their sound. Every time I hear this band the hairs on the back of my neck stand up. They have tapped into the best aspects of the early 80s UK sound (Riot City, ONE WAY SYSTEM etc) and added elements of TSOL and the 80s LA sound. A truly fantastic record that is already in my top 10 for next year! (TB)
(Backwards Masking)

DAS OATH – "Uber Alles" CD

The OATH, global scenester ensemble, has compiled all their releases to date on one handy dandy CD. You got it all right here: the tight pants, the manic hardcore and porn used artistically to convey a message…or something. All the records are compiled along with three comp tracks and a shitty, shitty cover of AGNOSTIC FRONT. Total over-the-top fast-as-hell hardcore insanity. Hell, buy it; make your limited edition cum-stain edition and eBay it. What do you have to lose? (NT)
(Gloom, PO Box 14253, Albany, NY 12212)

ONE REASON – "All Rivers Run South, All Roads Lead Home" CD

Emo-ey No Idea sounding punk from Cleveland, MS. Not bad, but nothing groundbreaking either. (JF)
(Plan It X South, 5810 W. Willis RD, Georgetown, IN 47122)

OPUS DEAD – "Control" CD

OPUS DEAD crank fourteen tracks of riffing, heavy metal fueled Spanish "hardcore" with lyrics critical of the society and infamous system we're forced to deal with on a daily basis. More WORD SALAD (albeit not as good) than say HHH or GRB. While it's not the best thing I've ever encountered, but not totally terrible either. If they would just stick to keeping it more primitive and straight-forward and leave out the SLAYER bits I would fully endorse them, but sadly…(MT)
(Apdo De Correos 35049, 28080 Madrid, SPAIN, opusdead@hotmail.com)

ORGANZ / O'DEATH, MY CHILD – "Drgz!Drgz!Drgz!" split LP

ORGANZ and O'DEATH, MY CHILD both hail from western Illinois (they told me) and that seems to be about where the similarites between the two end, unless you count both groups penchant towards noise. ORGANZ has "3 bass players, some drums and vocals" and sees fit to lay waste to hardcore in a devastating manner that to me sounds like BURMESE, sans the fuel air-bomb attack, and with a screamo singer. This is low-end destruction that will appeal to the damaged-hardcore crowd. O'DEATH, MY CHILD on the flip, is another beast altogether, and I'm not sure if it's pleasing to my thinking. Industrial electro-soundscapes with dancy beats and distorted vocals. Whispers and drones, bass guitar, and squealing elctronics. A punk-fi NITZER EBB meets REVOLTING COCKS (circa *You Goddamned Son of a Bitch Live*), maybe? Another interesting choice of bands for a split... I'll take the ORGANZ side. (WM)
(www.robotwinter.com))

PAINTBOX – "Cry Of The Sheeps" EP

Oh Chelsea, how did you become the punk guitar god that you are? For the unfamiliar, PAINTBOX play amazingly tuneful rocking Japanese punk—heavy on the rocknroll (as in fat riffs, heavy yet intricate guitars) but with hardcore's energy and ferocity. Truth be told, I think that the title track is kinda weak, but man the flip—scorchers. Especially the total barnburner "Betsu-Mirai" which showcases Chelsea's ability to create massive, lightning fast riffs, which maintain their sense of melody—blazing them into your head for days. Look for them to play some US gigs soon, be certain not to miss them if you can. (MT)
(Prank, PO Box 410892, San Francisco, CA 94141-0892, www.prankrecords.com)

PHANTOM LIMBS / THE VANISHING – split EP

The LIMBS' keyboards and effects-driven racket reminds me of late-70s prog-punks PUNISHMENT OF LUXURY. One of the more unique bands in the Bay Area and always worth checking out. On the other side, THE VANISHING have a much more new-wavey, death-disco thing going on. I picture rail-thin art students with heavy eyeliner dancing to this. Putting the two bands together is a combination that works. I'll probably listen to the PHANTOM LIMBS side more, for what that's worth. (AM)
(Hungry Eye, PO Box 20403, Tompkins Square Station, New York, NY 10009; www.hungryeyerecords.com)

PHOGO – "God God" EP

Every couple of issues a record comes along that reminds me of the old Slaampt! Records label out of late 90s Scotland, and here's another one. Strange howling combination of garage *moderne* and an almost shoe-gazerish dream-fuzz attack. Disorienting and quite original without hitting you over the head about how damn clever they are, which is a neat trick. It's six tracks of psych-punk done in a simple and thoroughly contemporary style, there's even a track that plays around with a dub sound without really going for it, it's like a radio playing in the next room. They also show a marked ability to set the phasers for stun and just rock in a SWELL MAPS kind-of-way. As an added plus, they are from Spain, which is not a country with much history in this vein. I want more life, fucker. (RW)
(Punk Away, PO Box 409, 07080 P.D.E. Mallorca, SPAIN, www.punkaway.com)

PLASTIC JESUS – "So You Say Rock N' Roll's A Sin" CD

Cool retro/street sounds from this New York band. In the vein of early SWINGIN' UTTERS and RANCID. Good punk rock with a dash of witty lyrics as displayed in the bound to be classic "I Can't Play Stairway". A strong full length. (RL)

(PO Box 2604, Malta, NY 12020, www.plastic-jesus.com)

POINT OF NO RETURN - "Imposed Freedom..." CD

An onslaught of anger and rage. POINT OF NO RETURN pound out seven tracks of politically charged Brazilian hardcore packed with ultra-heavy breakdowns and tons of chugga chugga. It has too much of a Xtough-guy-mosh-coreX feel for me to really get into, but if you like that kind of stuff, this is sure to kick your ass. (VH)

(CR20, PO Box 30241, Indianapolis, IN 464230-0241, www.xcatalystx.com)

THE PONYS – "Prosthetic Head / How Does It Taste?"

A teaser 45 for their much anticipated debut full length. My friend Nick says "They have a phaser on the snare…that's not cool!" What the fuck does Nick know anyway? Chicago's PONYS create some of the most interesting post-punk flavored pop around. The tunes are jam-packed with organ and various other gadgets, create a dark yet incredibly hooky brand of punk. Will more than likely end up being one of my favorites of 2004. (MC)

(In The Red, PO Box 50777, Los Angeles, CA 90050, www.intheredrecords.com)

PONYS – "Laced With Romance" LP

I had pretty high hopes for the first track on here, "Let's Kill Ourselves," and though I usually like a little more blood and sweat with my self-loathing, it's a solid enough song. The songs are nicely done throughout the LP, with a melancholy UK pop feel and no screwing around: one idea per song, communicated as succinctly as possible. "Little Friends" in particular, is a winner. They're just a little…pretty. The songs, and the band too. Do you appreciate a guitar that moonlights as a keyboard? Or perhaps a saw? Check it out. (AC)

(In The Red, PO Box 50777, Los Angeles, CA 90050, www.intheredrecords.com)

PREACHER GONE TO TEXAS – "From The Heartland" CD

PREACHER GONE TO TEXAS, from Iowa, pull together metallic hardcore with lots of melody and emo-driven parts. The musical direction is constantly jumping from burly breakdowns to sappy emo. And the frontman uses a variety of screamed, spoken, and sung vocals. This is pretty much hit and miss (mostly miss). It was just too generic for me. (RC)

(Sinister Label, PO Box 1178, La Grande Park, IL 60526, www.sinisterlabel.com)

THE PUNKS – LP

Another artyfact from Rave Up, 1976 recordings of a Detroit band that felt some affinity with "Punk" (in the various manners in which rock scribes and collectors had been bandying it about for several years) but which saddled them with a name that they probably later found embarrassing. The music is an interesting mix of STOOGE-isms (some songs have some pretty credible Iggy-esque vocals), DOORS spookiness/corniness and hard rock jamming. Not surprisingly, the short and to the point rockers are the highlights. (DD)

(Rave Up, Via Crispolti 16, 00159 Roma, ITALY, http://web.tiscali.it/raveup)

PURPLE HEARTS –" Smashing Time" LP

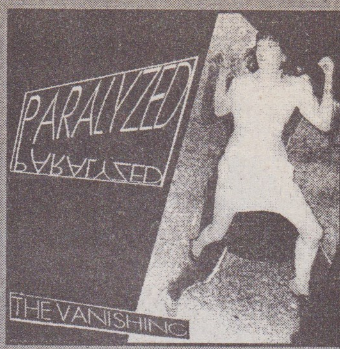
Another four freshed-faced mods from North East London who crawled there way out of the local youth club to the dizzy heights of bank holiday mod all dayers and a cherished support slot with THE JAM. Adding to the slew of '79 revival bands currently seeing a new light of day thinks to numerous re-issues of Detour records. Even in my heyday of parkas, glue, and dirty dreams of Lesley Ash, I thought this band were way too light in the loafers, preferring the brash hit and run tactics of the punked up mods such as THE V.I.P'S, CIRCLES and The CHORDS. . Not quite as soft as snow as The SECRET AFFAIR but just all to tame for this ex-mod. (SD)

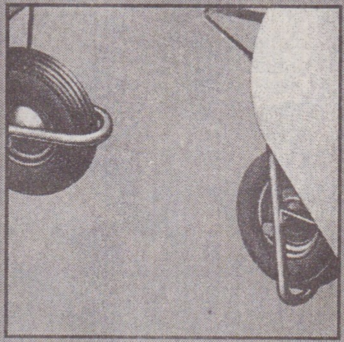
(Detour, PO BOX 18, Midhurst, West Sussex, GU29 9YU. UNITED KINGDOM, www.detour-records.co.uk)

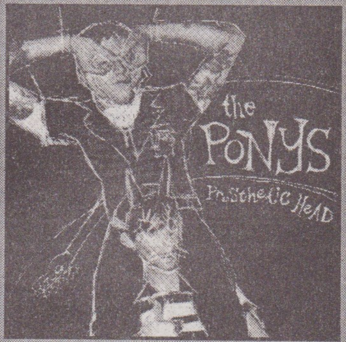
QUESTION MARK & THE MYSTERIANS / DEXTER ROMWEBER TRIO – split EP

More velvety sounds from QUESTION MARK & THE MYSTERIANS, produced by Norton Rec's own Billy Miller, which puts its vintage in some time within the last three or four years (probably). They've still got the kitsch Farfisa organ that drove their sound in the mid 60s, and it works just as well now. QUESTION MARK doesn't sound too different on their cover of the STONES' "Empty Heart" even though he's gotta be edging up against membership in the AARP at this point. Fine stuff. "Do you remember '69, baby" he intones, to which I can only respond "no." The DEXTER ROMWEBER TRIO swagger through another Jagger-Richards "heart" tune—Heart of Stone", which was better covered by the PAGANS during the early punk rock era. Worth it for the start-studded A-side. (JH)

(Norton)







RATTUS – LP

This 1984 LP (with translations of the lyrics in English) was probably the first RATTUS record to get wide attention, and for many helped put Finland in the map.. The style isn't the ultra-treble, paint-stripping HC of their first couple of records; this is solid, and crunching, with great bass and stop on a dime instrumentals. The varied style of this one makes it so interesting, ranging from almost spoken word to a TERVEET KADET rasp. I'll always be partial to their early stuff, but this amazing release is too good to pass up. (SS (ZCM c/o Josef Loderer, Wasgeming 60, CH-4055 Basel, SWITZERLAND)

REAL KIDS / JANET ST. CLAIR AND THE REAL KIDS – "Out Of Time / Ride On Baby"

....one of many in a series of Norton juke-box singles made to look like old London 45's and featuring various hip bands covering real old STONES standards.....nothing too wonderful really.....I mean it is the REAL KIDS and all but still, yawn....!!! My personal fave in this series is the ? AND THE MYSTERIANS slab.....those guys still know how to generate a "fuck-beat" out of any old song.....!!!!(SW)
(Norton)

THE REALTORS – "Guilt By Association" LP

They are the only punk band to ever be forced to change their name by The National Association of Realtors. This LP contains all four tracks from their 1979 EP plus some other unreleased recordings and two live songs from SF's Deaf Club in 1979. The music is power-popish art punk. They are not one of those bands that immediately hit you with that "why haven't I heard of these guys before?" They have some good songs. I am sure they were fun back in the day. (CK)
(Rave Up, Via Montecuccoli 13, 00176 Roma, Italy, raveup@tiscalinet.it)

REMEBERING NEVER – "Women And Children Die First" CD

Are you ready for a riff-heavy guitar assault from Florida? This is straight up metalcore that occasionally gives way to some emo-ish moments of melody. Prepare to be hit with a barrage of rumbling bass lines and loud chunky riffs that bring to mind COALESCE at times. They mix the tempos up a bit and try to get slightly technical, but this is pretty straightforward and simple. The lyrics are barked out with deep hateful growls, though he occasionally kills the effect by trying to sing. For what it is worth, this is a pretty solid release. (RC)
(Ferret, 167 Wayne St, #409, Jersey City, NJ 07302, www.ferretstyle.com)

RIOT-A-GO-GO – "A Piece Of It" CD

Catchy, driving, female-fronted punk rock. Pretty good stuff. The CD artwork appears to feature the members of RIOT-A-GO-GO wearing nothing but cake frosting on their naughty bits. What's the world coming to? You'll be blushing when the cashier at the record shop rings up this sale. (AM)
(Riot-A-Go-Go, riotagogomail@yahoo.com)

ROCKET FROM THE TOMBS – "Rocket Redux" CD

I guess you could say any ROCKET FROM THE TOMBS is better than no ROCKET FROM THE TOMBS. I was a little disappointed when they came thru town. Maybe it was because I wanted the 1975 RFTT or even better the DEAD BOYS. But the fact that RFTT is together at all should be considered a blessing. This is a current re-recording of the ROCKET classics. Done quite well too. A legendary band. (RL)
(Smog Veil, 550 W. Plumb Lane #B501, Reno, NV 89509, www.smogveil.com)

ROYAL ROUTES – "Toxic" EP

Swampy, grungy garage. And I mean *garage*, in the classic lo-fi ALARM CLOCKS covering HOWLIN' WOLF sense. These guys would be perfectly at home on the Voodoo Rhythm label, but their nomadic nature dictates that they wander the desert entertaining folx at gas stations and creepy motels with the "M" burned out on the roadside sign. I'm hip. (RW)
(Yakisakana, 51, Rue Renaudel, 76 100 Rouen, FRANCE)

SAVING GRACE – "Holiday Cruise 365" CD

This three piece combo cranks out the circa 1990 pop punk with a mix of gal and guy vocals. Similar in sound to all the DESCENDENTS and ALL influenced bands a la G WHIZ and BEN GRIM. The vocal chemistry just rules here. A great full length! (RL)
(High Fidelity, PO Box 1071, Grover Beach, CA 93483, www.savingfaceband.com)

S.B.V. / FEELIN' FINE! – split EP

Ultra-Fast, no bullshit, youth-crew hardcore from San Diego! There's an undeniably huge 7 SECONDS influence, especially vocally. I don't think they could pull it off if it weren't for his crackly voice, but they do. Two originals and a RIPCORD cover, packed with energy and speed. I can't complain. A few seconds after I start into the FEELIN' FINE! side of this split I'm quick to realize why the time was taken to label this record with sides A and B. FEELIN' FINE! are lucky to make a B-side. They fumble through five tracks of absolutely awful wannabe Slap-A-Ham grindcore. The song title "Life's Shit Sauce" is exactly what FEELIN' FINE! sound like. This could've been a great one sided 7." (VH)
(S.B.V., 4419 Louisana St. #3, San Diego, CA 92116, xsepticedgex@cox.net)

SCARLET LETTER - "How Is Your Heart?" CD

New Jersey hardcore played with more speed and less machismo than most Jersey hardcore bands. At times it's melodic in the same way as KID DYNAMITE. Towards the end of the disc it almost becomes pop-punk. It's definitely not abrasive the way I like hardcore to be, but the lyrics and songwriting are good. I can't complain. (VH)

(Black Matter, PO Box 666, Troy, NY 12181)

SCHIFOSI – "Ill Winds of Outopia" LP

SCHIFOSI hail from the land down under. When they aren't busy wrestling crocodiles, chasing around kangaroos, and snorkeling in the Great Barrier Reef, they like to sit down with an ice cold Fosters and play some deep vocal punk rock. Female vocals that are deep as hell akin to SKARP, pounding TRAGEDY-esque parts that break into pretty guitar parts. Emo-Crust? I would say it gets exactly 5 out of 10 points. (NT)

(Broken Rain, PO Box 244, Northcote, Victoria, AUSTRAILIA)

THE SECT – "Simply Sunday / Just Can't Win"

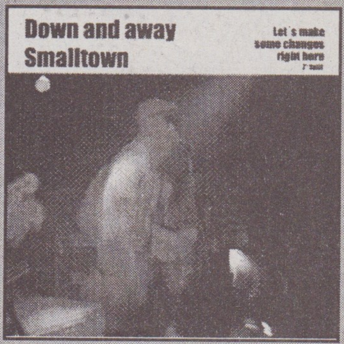
Haunting Sixties folky garage by angry rebellious fifteen-year olds who thought they were intellectuals (at least that's what the now grown-up writer of "Simply Sunday" now blames for this moment of naïve genius)? Sign me up for this sect! (DD)

(Dionysus, PO Box 1975, Burbank CA 91507, www.dionysusrecords.com)

SHEEVAYOGA / STERBEHILFE – split EP

I certainly never thought I would be reviewing a band with the word yoga in their name and yet here I am. SHEEVAYOGA who are from the Czech Republic play a hectic mix of grindy thrash, that is packed full of abrupt tempo changes and rattling blast beats. The vocals are generally forced screams, but occasionally they sing and I will be the first to tell you it is pretty horrendous when that happens. STERBEHILFE who are from Germany blast their way through a crazed mess of grinding noise and fast tuneless thrash. Total wall of noise blasts. Sound like your thing? Then get to crackin'. (RC)

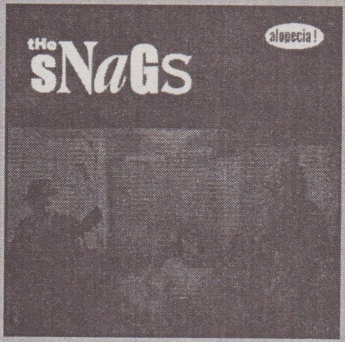
(Hyenyzm, Petr Halgas, Leskovec 340, p. Dvorce U Bruntalu 793 68 CZECH REPUBLIC)



THE SHIVERING – "Brand the Lion's Mouth" EP

Wow, this seven-inch sounds really different than anything else I have heard by THE SHIVERING and I really enjoy it. It looks like their lineup has changed slightly: they added an additional guitarist who also does vocals. Led in by feedback, the song on the A-side is fast and raw with passionately screamed vocals. Coda Q, the song on the B-side, is a little slower with more subdued yelled vocals and it *grooves*. If you're into early Vermin Scum bands like SLEEPING BODY or BORN AGAINST, you'll dig on this. (ZM)

(Council, PO Box 220691 Chicago, IL 60622)



SHOCK - LP

Smart LA new wave punkers who delivered the monster collector smash *This Generation's On Vacation*, a perfect punk/pop disc (the band's other 7" isn't half bad either). Their first 7" was booted recently, but this LP will save you tracking that down. Along with the 7" tracks there are what appear to be some unreleased gear which is interesting, but doesn't have the energy of the other stuff. Less punk and more pop than a lot of the LA bands at the time (late 70s), with more emphasis on hooks and melody. As with all the Rave Up stuff, there is limited info, which is a shame, but this is definitely one of the more worthy releases from that camp. (TB)

(Rave Up, Via Montecuccoli 13, 00176 Roma, ITALY)

SCHUND – LP

Here's a smoking reissue of this early Austrian band's EPs and shows from the first few years of self-conscious punk. Great, rough, pre-hardcore punk rock fronted by spiky-haired hottie Doris Schund. The songs have basic and thrilling choruses, like "Panik, Panik, Panik!" If you buy this, you will actually spin it. File it near ULTIMO RESORTE, under acne & studs-style youthful magnetism. The packaging includes a reprinted chronology, in the form of an old fanzine, of political events from SCHUND's first time around. (AC)

(Hohnie c/o Andreas Höhn, An Der Kuhtränke 7, 31535 Neustadt, GERMANY, hoehnie@gmx.net)

SIR BALD DIDDLEY AND HIS WIG-OUTS- "Drive Like An Italian" CD

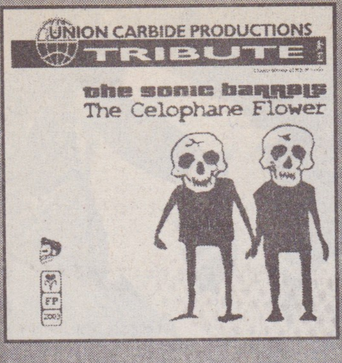
Surf instros with various styles of vocal numbers thrown in. The instros are fine; some of the non-instros lean towards less abrasive garage, some are almost quasi-GARY USHER except that the lead vocals aren't songbirdish enough for that racket. (DD)

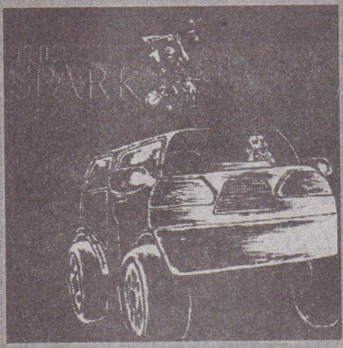
(Alopecia!, 35 Mill Ln, Benson, Oxford, OX10 6SA, ENGLAND, alopeciarecords@hotmail.com)

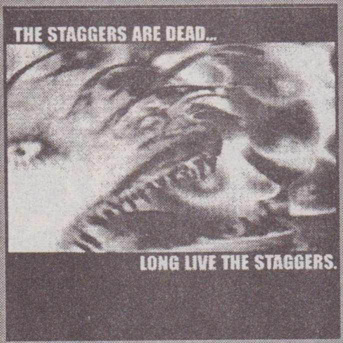
SKIMMER – "Still" CD

I love this UK band! The closest thing to a current MEGA CITY FOUR. Not a bad release yet from these UK buzzsaw pop punkers. A new full length with the usual catchy tunes a plenty. Certainly one of the UK's best bands, rapidly approaching legendary status itself. If you recall that great Decoy sound of MEGA CITY FOUR, SENSELESS THINGS, and PERFECT DAZE here's another go. The best band on a great label! (RL)

(Crackle, PO 7, Otley, LS21 1YB, UK, www.crackle.freeuk.com)







THE SLOWMOTIONS – "Make Love / Yes, Future!!"

I'm calling the A-side "Make Love" because: A) the title is in Japanese and B) "Make Love" is the only lyric that I can understand. None of that really matters, as this single just fucking screams *Terminal Boredom* outtakes. Up-tempo, booming Japanese punk the way you remember it. None of that new wave or power pop influence on this puppy. Yes, Slowmotions!! (MC)
(H.G. Fact, 105 Nakano Shinbashi-M, 2-7-15 Yayoi-Cho, Nakano, Tokyo, 164-0013, JAPAN)

SMALL HOURS – "The Anthology" LP

The SMALL HOURS were little more than bit-part players in the '79 mod revival, only releasing one EP and a handful of comp tracks. That being said the EP is a stormer, and their song "The Kid" has been a long-time mod/power-pop favorite round our house, so I was pretty excited by this release. It's a mix of EP, demo and unreleased tracks all wrapped up in smart packaging with the usual Detour eye for detail (including photos and a history of the band). As with all these anthologies, some of the tracks could have stayed buried in a closet, but the good is worth the admission price—less raucous than the CHORDS or early JAM mixing up power-pop with more of a soul edge (though nowhere near as syrupy as SECRET AFFAIR). When I was a nipper I thought the mods were a bunch of fruits, but these days I'm digging the mod vibe... now, where's me Vespa? (TB)
(Detour, PO Box 18, Midhurst, West Sussex, GU29 9YU, UNITED KINGDOM)

SMALLTOWN / DOWN AND AWAY – split EP

On a handful of singles and a burn CDr copy of their last two demos, SMALLTOWN have managed to gatecrash their way into my number one spot of current punk rock acts. Maybe a full length could even elevate them to the cherished position of numero uno punk band of all time. So if you ain't familiar with the going ons of these crafty Swedes, expect a healthy dose of hook laiden passion filled rock, sung with the same burning conviction of there forefathers such as STIFF LITTLE FINGERS, THE JAM and NEWTOWN NEUROTICS. Unfortunately just one song, but then again I treat every new SMALLTOWN tune like a nugget of gold. Stepping up to the plate on the flip we have DOWN AND AWAY, with two songs close in style to the above mentioned. Churning out inspiring GC5 type punk rock, definitely enrolled in the smarter school of street punk. One to keep a close eye on. (SD)
(Broken Bones)

SNAGS – CD

UK garage band fronted by SIR BALD DIDDLEY, of frequent 90s releases. His previous stuff was pretty straight-up trad 60s treble-ophonic with a dominant surf feel (really well played), while this is more of a garage punk stomper. The songs are a little lacking in the distinctiveness department, and the resulting bleed renders short-term memory loss. Sorry, what's on again? (RW)
(Alopecia, 35 Mill Lane, Benson, Wallingford, Oxon, OX10 6SA, UNITED KINGDOM)

SOIFASS – "Es Is Zeit" LP

Scum Fuck Mucke Records from Germany has a punk/oi winner for you this month. SOIFASS play polished oi with lots of melodies and good harmonies. This is well-honed street music for the punks and skins. The singing on the *Es Is Zeit* LP is deep and guttural with lots of chugging guitar activity. Very good! There are some quiet parts, which build into full-blown oi crunch all sung in German This is good sing-a-long pub music for beer drinkers! (BR)
(Scum Fuck Mucke, PSF 100709,46527 Dinslaken, GERMANY; www.soifass.de)

SOME ACTION – "Drawing Blood" CDEP

I was so totally off on this one. By the lay out and weird see through disc I assumed this would be pretentious hipster crap, especially after I found out they were from NYC. Turns out I was wrong. Hey, it was bound to happen sooner or later, right? Five really incredible SAINTS/DEAD BOYS sounding tunes that make you want to scream along and bounce around in your leather jacket and skinny tie. This is what a real punk rock band should sound like. (BM)
(Gigantic, 59 Franklin St, Suite #403, New York, NY 10013, www.someaction.com)

THE SONIC BARRELS / CELOPHANE FLOWER – split EP

This is a tribute to UNION CARBIDE PRODUCTIONS. UNION were a great hard rockin' STOOGES/ BEEFHEART influenced bunch of Swedes who put out a couple of records in the 80s and are responsible for at east one classic LP, *In the Air Tonight*. THE SONIC BARRELS do "Ring My Bell" from the aforementioned LP and they do it justice. A great true-to-the-original stomper that TURBONEGRO wish they wrote. The flip side has me stumped. The CELOPHANE FLOWER chime in with "Golden Age." The track is a six-minute country-tinged ballad. I don't believe it's a UCB song. The track is written by a Person and Lundberg. Lundberg, I'm guessing, is Ebbott Lundberg, the vocalist of UCB. It's tough to get through. UCB fans will want to hear the SONIC BARRELS track, but don't know who else this would appeal to. Limited edition of 500 copies. (RR)
(Golden_ Shower_ of_ Hits@hotmail.com)

SOPHIE NUN SQUAD – "Passion Slays The Dragon" LP

SOPHIE NUN SQUAD's eclectic sound falls somewhere between SCHLONG, BIG BOYS, and HICKEY. The problem is that while those aforementioned bands where successful with that sound, SOPHIE

NUN SQUAD misses more then they hit. Perhaps this is due to the fact that SOPHIE NUN SQUAD lists eleven people in their band. Sorry kids, but too many cooks in the kitchen. (JF)
(Harlan, 7025 Geromino, N. Little Rock, AR 72116)

THE SPARK – "Less Slow, More Go" EP

These guys could be awesome people (although I always write a review with that assumption), but honestly this kind of stuff is so done as of recent. It's thrashy punk like TEAR IT UP or something, with more of a NEGATIVE APPROACH feel. The lyrics are about things like "don't tell me how to live my life" or "fuck our country" and a BLACK FLAG cover. How can you be "the spark that starts the fucking fire" with mediocre shit like this? It's not that they suck, it's just bringing nothing to the table. No traces of humor or any attempt to do something original. I am just bored and sick of this. (WR)
(Go Home, 2981 Falls Rd., Baltimore, MD 21211, mike@headcold.net)

SPITS – LP

Hmmm, how to describe the SPITS? Sometime they sound like I think the RAMONES would have sounded like if they were a new wave band, sometimes they have a lo-fi basement thang goin' on, and sometimes they just sound art damaged and noisy, but they always sound awesome. I missed seeing them live last time they were in town, but that won't happen again.(DP)
(Dirtnap, PO Box 21249, Seattle, WA 98111, dirtnaprecs.com)

SQUASH BOWELS / SEWN SHUT – split EP

Oops. I listened to the SQUASH BOWELS side on the wrong speed. Sounded like a little like a rudimentary G.I.S.M. I got it on the right speed now and they've definitely lost the G.I.S.M. vibe. This is some violent, wall of vicious noise grind set in Poland, with loads of guttural concrete vomited vocals—with tons of effects on the vox, I might add. SEWN SHUT: a huge Swedish machine of precision pummel and smash grind, bludgeon riffs set to Crush Kill Destroy. My money lies on the SEWN SHUT side. (WM)
(Hyenyzm, Leskovec 340, 793 68 p.Dvorce u Bruntálo, CZECH REPUBLIC, hyenyzm@centrum.cz)

STAGGERS – "...are Dead, Long Live the Staggers..." CD

Wow, what crisp production! I can hear every mumble, every tired riff, every cymbal crash, and every stock feedback whine. When "665" goes on forever in an attempt at atmosphere, or drama, or whatever, I can discern every plodding moment. Then the next space-surf styled instrumental interlude lurches into the driveway, the bass player noodles around for a while, and I again realize that recording technology has advanced to the point when the most DIY band in the world is now capable of sounding slick on the cheap. This band needs an identity; on this they've been neutered. (RW)
(Overtone, 274 E 14th Ave, Columbus, OH, 43202)

THE STAGGERS – "Will Make Hundreds" CD

Pretty rocking, fast garagey rock, maybe like SPEEDEALER or something, mixed with occasional snatches of BIG BLACK dissonance. Unfortunately, the music is paired with some depressingly meatheaded lyrics that seem culled straight from right-wing talk radio or the pages of *Hustler*. Too bad. (AM)
(Stagger, www.thestaggers.com)

STOMPIN CHARLIES – "Life's Too Short" CD

The title sums it all up on my feelings of having to waste time reviewing this CD of juvenile without being funny SCREECHING WEASEL/QUEER clones. (JF)
(www.cartridgemusic.net)

STOP AND THINK – "Both Demos" LP

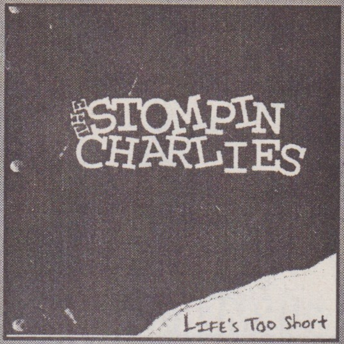
STOP AND THINK finally get the vinyl treatment. These 11 tracks were originally released on two cassette demos, so some of the songs repeat. This band went on to influence and spawn almost every band on Lockin Out Records. This is what a straight edge hardcore record should sound like. In other words, its fast, aggressive, and from the heart Anything else said would be overkill. (CC)
(Painkiller, 8 Burney Street Apt. 1, Boston, MA, 02120, www.painkillerrecords.com)

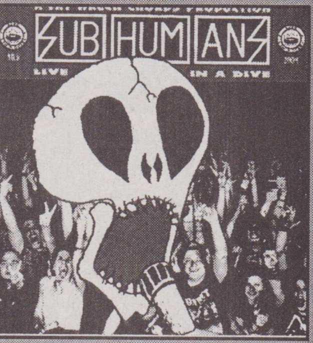
STRAIGHTJACKET – "The Loudest Voice" EP

Good tuneful mid-tempo punk with a street *feel* and pop melody from Portland, not unlike, dare-I-say-it, Swedish darlings SMALLTOWN, or a more urgent ONE MAN ARMY. STIFF LITTLE FINGERS meets SCREECHING WEASEL. Very nice. (AD)
(Dead Rock, PO Box 42301, Portland, OR 97242)

STRONG COME ONS – "Yell A Lot And Suck!" EP

Fans of the Wisconsin punk boom, take note! Strong Come Ons feature members of CATHOLIC BOYS, TEARS and BLUE BALLS. On this single, their second, they mine THE OBLIVIANS and create some of the dirtiest, loudest two-man racket around. I like it much more than *Trailer Sessions*, if that means anything to you...(MC)
(Big Neck, PO Box 8144, Reston, VA 20195)



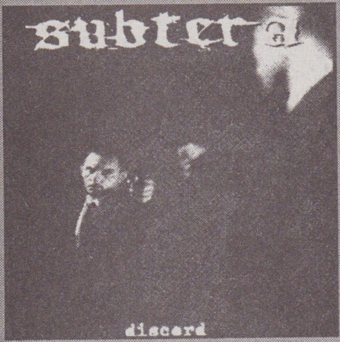


SUBHUMANS - "Live In A Dive" CD

Great live recording of a great band. Twenty-six classic tracks spanning their long career of a quarter century or so. This is up there with *Liveage*, a live album that's actually worth getting. (AD)
(Fat)

SUBMERGE - "Album" CD

French SUBMERGE play thick, heavy, mid-tempo metal w/ cookie monster vocals. This CD is compiles their *In Gold We Crush* EP with their splits w/ ANANDA, DEAD FOR A MINUTE, KARRAS, and SUPERSTATIC REVOLUTION, and includes one unreleased track. (VH)
(Throne, PO Box 8035, 33200 Gijon, Spain, www.thronerecords.com)



SUBTERA – "Discord" CD

This CD is full of fast, fast grindy hardcore chock full of blast beats, double bass, and echo-y, effect-y deep vocals. Although this band is Brazilian, they sing in English about the lying government, alienation of modern life, and standing up for what you believe in. Eight tracks in 41: 30 minutes. (ZM)
(Tumba r. 24 de Maio, 62-3 Andar loja 465 Sao Paulo-SP, CEP 01041-000, BRASIL)

SUBTERA – "Nothing And Death" CD

Ferocious Brazilian hardcore with jackhammer drums and harsh, tight riffs galore, paced at pulverize. This reminds me of the recent THE KILLS EP, released on 625, or RUPTURE, without the offensive lyrics, in the intensity of the delivery and the non-stop, fast-tempo, all-out assault of the music. Uncompromisingly raw and intense, this is one for fans of extreme—although, the short, fast crowd might not enjoy the 10 minute-plus jam, with accompanying morse code, that poses as the last song. (WM)
(Morte Pacifica, CX. Postal 115, Coti. SP. CEP 06700-970 BRASIL)

THE SUICIDE COMMANDOS – "The Commandos Commit Suicide Dance Concert" LP

.....two whole LP's of slop from Minneapolis's SUICIDE COMMANDOS, recorded live at Jay's Longhorn, November 24th 1978....!!!! I guess this is a re-ish.....the sound quality is a little muddy, but the performance has sex energy.....!!!! I was never too much of a fan, but this shit is moving me pretty good.....nice choice of covers mixed with goof-ball originals.....!!!!! These guys covered "Wild In The Streets" years before Keith & Co. turned it into a KROQ classic.......!!!! Not bad for three very ugly motherfuckers from the mid-west.....I wonder if they're still amongst the living????? (SW)
(Rave Up, Via Castracane 3 – 00176 Roma, ITALY, web.tiscali.net/raveup)

SUPERYOB - "Ghetto Blaster" CD

Third release from the band fronted by infamous oi cockney cabaret artist Frankie "Boy" Flame. I thought this was going to suck, but once again, I couldn't have been more wrong. In fact I would use this as an example of how oi *should* sound. Tremendously catchy punk/oi with clever lyrics that had me hitting the repeat button over and over. These cheeky cockneys sound like the best parts of the BUSINESS and COCKNEY REJECTS mixed with one of my all-time favorites, COCK SPARRER. If only all the skins out there would release quality goods like this. Nice one, guvnors. (TB)
(Underground London, www.superyob.com)

SWARRRM - "Nise Kyuseishu Domo" CD

Epic grindcore direct from Japan. SWARRRM go all out, layering piano and mandolin on top of their 80s hair metal guitar riffs. The vocals sound like someone gargling sewage... impressive, for sure. But if it's actually a good or a bad thing, is up to you. Song lengths vary from a minute and a half to six-minute masturbation sessions. I wish they would just keep it short. All of the extra shit they throw in is just boring. (VH)
(HG Fact, 105 Nakano Shinbashi-M, 2-7-15 Yayoi-Cho, Nakano, Tokyo, 164-0013, JAPAN, www.interq.or.jp/japan/hgfact)

TALLBOYS – "Scallywag Tag" CD

Not sure where this band's from, but I wouldn't be at all surprised if it was near Washington DC. There's a definite Dischord influence coming through, like SLANT 6 maybe, but combined with a post-punk, Rough Trade, KLEENEX type of thing. A keeper! (AM)
(Jakattak, www.jakattak.com)

TEXAS MOTHE FUCKERS – "Too Much (Is not Enough) / Master Of Disaster" –

Swedis rock punk. Solid shit that sounds along the lines of GLUECIFER or DEMONS. Scandinavia cranks this kind of shit out by the boatload, and just like this record, its all pretty damn good. Search it out and get it. (AS)
(Motherfuckin, motherfuxxers@hotmail.com)

TEXAS MOTHERFUCKERS/THE RIOTS – split EP

Fuck Jesus, Jesus FUCK! HORRIBLE!!! TEXAS MOTHERFUCKERS check in with two country-fried punk-rawk numbers. Think THE HOOKERS, minus the goat horn cover art and membership in Satan's Army. The RIOTS aren't much better. They feature the same tough-guy vocal snarl. It's a shame really, since their brand of hard rock was at least catchy. Oh god… solos. Enough already! (MC)
(Tear It Up, www.tear-it-up-records.nl)

THEE FLYING DUTCHMEN – "Thee Caveman Sessions" LP

It seems quite stupid that I should be forced to waste everyone's time reviewing this record again after I (and Dr. Dante) picked it as one of my (our) Top 10 records of 2003 and already had to blabber on telling you why. But I know these days you need to reiterate things or people just don't seem to get it. So here goes. There aren't many bands that can even come close to great sound of the MUMMIES or SUPERCHARGER. God knows many have tried. THEE FLYING DUTCHMEN manage to get some similar frolicking garage music blazing through some cheap shitty recordings. It should sound like a disaster, but this one cool record. (CK)
(Boom Boom, 20720 SE 192nd St, Renton, WA 98058)

TWENTYINCHBURIAL – "The Void We Carry" CD

Screamo with emo breakdowns. From Spain. Makes me think of skinny boys in mesh hats and tight brown shirts clapping their hands to the beat. Hey, if you are into that kinda thing… (JA)
(Underhill. PO Box 4220, 31080 Pamplona, SPAIN)

TWENTYINCHBURIAL / PN – split CD

TWENTYINCHBURIAL from Portugal play modern metallic hardcore with a melodic flair and harsh, gargled vocals. PN, from Belgium, play poppy metal mixed with rumbling metalcore that mixes sung and screamed vocals. All I have to say is that those high-pitched sung vocals of PN have got to go—I really can't stand that shit. (RC)
(Underhill, PO Box 4220, 31080 Pamplona, SPAIN, www.underhillrcs.com)

UNKIND – EP

I don't want to be unkind (hahaha, I made a funny) but this isn't that impressive. They play that punk rock that all the kids in Portland seem to be going apeshit over, you know, harmonies in the guitars, slow pretty parts followed by pounding rhythms as the singer yells something about "wastelands and bombs by capitalism's cruel hand" or something silly like that. When done right this style of music is powerful and makes me want to throw my fist in the air but when done wrong it is just plodding and well…kind of boring. (NT)
(Fight, Hikivuorenkatu 17 D 36, 33710 Tampere, FINLAND)

UNSANE CRISIS / HASHASSIN – split CD

Whoa! UNSANE CRISES kicked me straight in the eardrum with a blazing fast attack of blurry grind that occasionally reached DISCORDANCE AXIS levels of hyperspeed. Dual vocals and a flurry of time changes will keep your ears nailed to the wall. HASHASSIN, on the other hand, gouge their way through 13 songs of blasting goregrind gone haywire. If the chaotic drumming doesn't get you, then those gargled, throat-rupturing vocals will. The HASHASSIN stuff is pretty chaotic and noisy, but I know people will still like it. But the precision and fury of UNSANE CRISIS is definitely more up my alley. (RC)
(Throne, PO Box 8035, 33200 Gijon, SPAIN, www.thronerecords.com)

THE UNSEEN – "Explode" CD

This band has been around for at least 10 years, I think. So if you are into "street punk stuff," you have probably heard them by now and formed an opinion. This band, out of Boston, plays super melodic anthemic punk that takes from bands like THE EXPLOITED or G.B.H. If I had to compare them to a more recent band, I would say ANTI FLAG. That said, this record is more produced then their previous ones, and I don't think it sounds too great like this, just kind of a boring, big production. The art is just obviously computer done, standard fare. I'm not that into the record, but I think it is pretty good for what it is. Look for them on the Warped Tour. (WR)
(BYO, PO Box 67609, Los Angeles, CA 90067, www.byorecords.com)

URBAN TERROR – "Demo Classics" CD

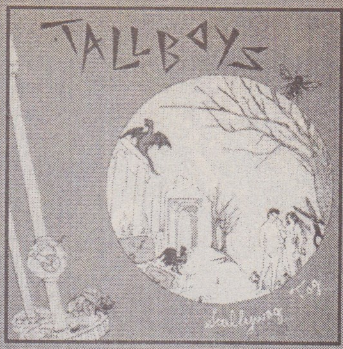
This is all right. Some raging Japanese punk rock with some garage flourishes. Music to my ears. A 30 track collection of unreleased stuff, out of print 7"ers (a few on HG Fact and MCR), flexis, and tapes. It appears the material spans 1988-1995 or so. Great slashing, ringing guitars, and frantic drumming with cool vocals. The somewhat but not too shoddy production is fantastic. Nice looking booklet with flyer repros, looks like these guys shared bills with GUITAR WOLF, COLORED RICE MEN, DEATHSIDE, JACKIE AND THE CEDRICS, and other greats. Must have been fun. Recommended. (RR)
(www.urbanterror.jp)

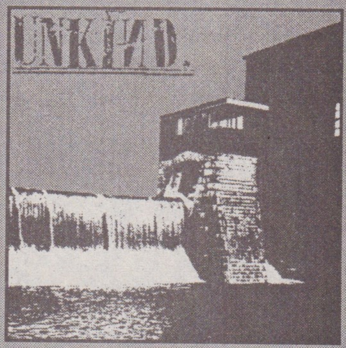
VIA SATELLITE –"Aux Ed" CD

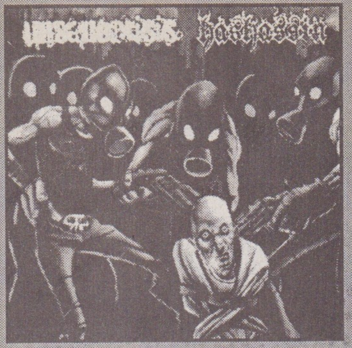
Upbeat emo that reminds me of a faster MINERAL. Male and female vocals and slow-to-fast music, basically yer typical… emo. (AD)
(Ass-card, Annenstr. 5 1 44137, Dortmund, GERMANY)

VITAMIN X – "Random Violence" CD

Awesome straight edge hard-coe. But what is that DEAD AND GONE sound that slips in unexpectedly? Semi-massive choruses. Huh? These guys played the Bay and rocked it. The punks. Every song relevant to the 2000s and all of them desiring you to slice an "XXX" in your wrist. (JA)
(Good Luck, Parl-BLD B1F, 3-15-8, Nishisinjuku, shinjuku, Tokyo 160-0023, JAPAN)







VON ZIPPERS – "The Crime Is Now" LP

Every once in a while a band that I had only heard via comps or other peoples record collections totally smokes my ass once I get a chance to listen to it while reading the sleeve. The Von Zippers and their "Crime Is Now" LP is just such a record. While I knew all about the Von Zippers Canadian garage rock sound I knew nothing of their social/political lyrics. On this here vinyl platter there are songs dealing with: consumerism, the environment, religious control, and privatization among others. Let me tell you, it is so much more fun to dance to the death of the state. While the CD is on Estrus, the LP is on…(JF)
(Alien Snatch, Morikeweg 1, 74199, Untergruppenbach, GERMANY)

WALTER DANIELS AND WADE DRIVER – "Don'tcha Let Nobody Turn You 'Round" EP

Brilliant. A two-man band consisting of harmonica and drums. That's right folks, no pussyfooting around with guitars or even bass. I know WALTER DANIELS from his work with JACK 'O FIRE and the OBLIVIANS. WADE DRIVER is from some of favorite bands, THE HICKOIDS, CORDUROY and 50 MILLION. Together they blast out one STRANGLERS and two blues covers. It's wild. I am amazed they pull it off. (CK)
(Shake Your Ass, capinch66@fastwebnet.it)

WHITE FLAG - "R is for Rocket, U is for Unreleased" LP

I used to own this budget-basement compilation tape (that I ordered out of the pages of either *MRR* or *Flipside)* that featured a lot of the material off *R is for Rocket, U is for Unreleased.*The memories come flooding back upon listening: some of them welcome, others less so. WHITE FLAG were, and apparently still are, a long-running Los Angeles punk group that walked a swaying tightrope between the Hollywood growl of the GERMS and the self-aware irony of bands like REDD KROSS, fronted by spandex-clad hessian Al Bum and mustachioed guitarist Pat Fear. This reissue collects the long out-of-print *R is for Rocket* LP with a side of live tracks and oddities and endities. Their music's tough and fast when they allowed it to be, and their cover of the PARTRIDGE FAMILY's "I Think I Love You" is probably the best version of a David Cassidy standard I've heard. I coulda gone for a reissue of their great *Third Strike* LP instead, but this record ought to satisfy members of the cult. (JH)
(Get Back)

WOLVES / TRANSISTOR TRANSISTOR – split LP

Though both of these bands seem to come from a similar pedigree of influences, their styles are different enough that there is quite an interesting complimentary effect that the record as a whole has on the listener. I threw on the WOLVES side first and was pleased to find material that seems much better than the previous releases on Coalition. Members of ORCHID, yes, but the songs here are more like a cross between UNIVERSAL ORDER OF ARMEGDDON (or GREAT UNRAVELING) and PORTRAITS OF PAST. Great stuff. On the flip, TRANSISTOR TRANSISTOR seem to coalesce the best parts of early BLOOD BROTHERS, DRIVE LIKE JEHU, and UNIVERSAL ORDER OF ARMAGEDDON into one solid package. The songs are to the point and put everything in place with great precision. A great split, and one I will be picking up for myself very shortly. (SP)
(Level Plane, www.level-plane.com)

WRANGLER BRUTES – "Two Songs" EP

This one-sided seven-inch picks up where BORN AGAINST left off, featuring Sam McPheeters's long-awaited return to fronting a "proper" hardcore band. The twist is, while BORN AGAINST were starting to sound more and more emo towards the end, this is nothing short of direct, throat-grabbing hardcore punk. The format of the record is less than inspiring (no lyrics, song titles, or even band name) but the music is great. (AM)
(no address)

YE OLDE BUTTFUCK – "The Burden of a Southern Future" EP

Yet another Iggy Scam ensemble. His distinctive drumming drives a chorus-driven, melodic, punk along the lines of CHRIMPSHRINE and SHOTWELL. I think this EP is slightly better than *How to Get to Heaven…* due to the facts that this EP has two more songs, a better cover and a better title. Both are splendid records. (HM)
(Raw Sugar, PO Box 53011, New Orleans, LA 70153)

YE OLDE BUTTFUCK – "How to Get to Heaven from Chattanooga, Tennessee" EP

Like many of the incestuous, Chattanooga-based punk bands, YE OLDE BUTTFUCK plays that style of country-influenced, melodic punk rock that so many of us like. In the tradition of (and featuring members of) bands like STUN GUNS, THE SHAFFERS, and JACK PALANCE BAND, YE OLDE BUTTFUCK belts out three originals and a ROLLING STONES cover. YE OLDE BUTTFUCK is very similar to a band like BLANK FIGHT or a faster, more distorted THIS BIKE IS A PIPE BOMB. The art is "Eric" Scam style, simple but nothing amazing. A good record. And oh and, by the way, their name is YE OLDE BUTTFUCK simply because you are wondering, "what's up with their name?" (WR)
(Shut Up!, PO Box 1671, Oakland, CA 94604)

YOUR NEW FRIEND – "Smoke 'n' Thunder" CD

Speedy pop punk from the UK with those emo tempo changes. Decent stuff in the ANNALISE and MILLOY vein. Four tracks with one having the great title "David Lee Roth, I Too Am Running With This Devil Of Which You Speak!". A little early to see how these guys will hold up in this crowded genre. (RL)
(Revenge Therapy, PO Box 914, Belfast, BT15 5YA, UNITED KINGDOM, yournewfriend30_06@hotmail.com)

YOUR MINUS – "This is a Reason" CD

Some top notch straight up melodic hardcore punk rock from Japan. Rocking punk with hoarse female vocals that bring to mind locals THIS IS MY FIST. They do a great job of mixing up speed and style song to song while still managing to keep the flow of the CD going. Powerful guitar lines ala RAMONES or at times POISON IDEA, but completely different than either of those bands. It is great to hear something that can't be compared to one single band and can only be described as totally *punk.* (NT)
(www.crispynuts-label.com)

ZEGOTA – "Reclaim" CD

This is one eclectic and powerful anarcho-hardcore album. Many of the tracks reach epic status, with one surpassing the eleven-minute mark. Although some songs might drag on a bit too long for listeners that want to be constantly bombarded with fast, brutal hardcore, I feel like the simple and beautiful mellow parts complement the intense screamy times. During those screamy times, the music songs a lot like their first LP, *Movements in the Music,* with a little more of a punk sound (including classic anarchopunk style snare drum rolls). There are several primarily instrumental songs, including piano, acoustic guitar, bongos, and sounds of traffic, which greatly remind me of A SILVER MT. ZION'S LP *This is Our Punk Rock* (minus the whiny vocals). The packaging is phenomenal and the lyrics inspiring, revolutionary, and poetic. I was a little worried that ZEGOTA was wandering far, far away from their roots after I heard their last full length *Namaste* but this uncommon and uncustomary album totally exceeded my expectations and is indeed exceptional. (ZM)
(Crimethinc. Urban Pirates PO Box 2133, Greensboro, NC 27402)

V/A – "England Belongs to Me" 3xLP boxset

Okay, this is a limited-to-50 boxset that screams: "We had vinyl left but no original sleeves!" If you have the original volumes of these comps, these are identical. It's all hyper-rare late 1970's UK punk and power-pop, all well and good, but like I said…(RW)
(no address)

V/A – "Kuzeb '92-'02" 2xLP

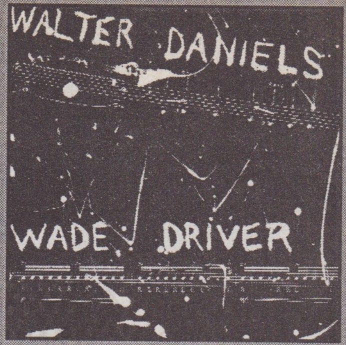
Kuzeb, in Switzerland, is a community space that has been hosting shows for over ten years now. This double LP set is an impressive compilation of many of the bands that have played there. A wide array of punk styles ranging from straight-edge hardcore all the way to ska-punk are scattered throughout the 31 tracks. The variety of bands includes CONCRETE SOX, EXTINCTION OF MANKIND, MISERY, SABOT, STRIKE, DOOM, PEACOCKS, SKALARIAK and many more. A great booklet includes a list of all bands that have passed through. An inspiring, totally DIY project that's well produced and presented. (SR)
(Rinderherz, Postfach 3634, CH-5001 Aauau, SWITZERLAND, rinderherz@gmx.net)

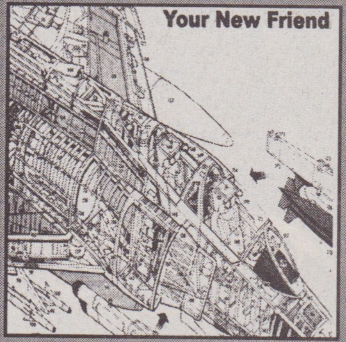
V/A – "Maybe Chicago?" CD

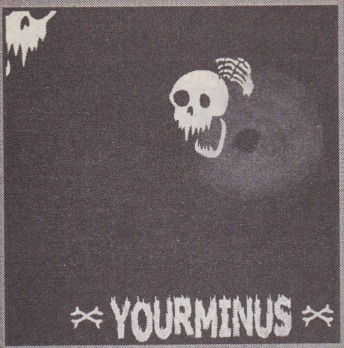
Maybe Chicago? Yeah, maybe Chicago. If this compilation is any indication of things to come, I predict this big-shouldered midwestern city to be the next musical "hot" spot, if it's not already (are we still nealing towards Seattle? I can't keep up anymore). This town's got it—all the ingredients that make a good scene are there: a handful of really good bands, a handful of mediocre bands (that are trying to be like the really good bands), a notorious music fest known as The Chicago Blackout, and most importantly, a pervy garage rock zine called *Horizontal Action* documenting it all. Love 'em or hate 'em, those *H.A.* guys are responsible for rounding up all of these bands, putting 'em in print, and making a scene out of 'em. Shit's goin down in Slab Town. Look who's representing the city on this comp: the BASEBALL FURIES (who moved there from Buffalo, NY), the TYRADES, the PONYS—heard of them?—the WHITE+OUTS, VEE DEE, HOT MACHINES, and FUNCTIONAL BLACKOUTS…heard of them? No? …you will. (AS)
(Criminal IQ, 3540 N. Southport, Chicago, IL. 60657, www.criminaliq.com)

V/A – "Move To Riot" 2xLP

I'm always a sucker for primo original New Zealand punk, and this is the best vinyl document to surface that documents the scene *in toto*. 25 tracks across four sides gets to some of the 'biggies' (SPELLING MISTAKES, SUBURBAN REPTILES) and includes some unreleased stuff by the likes of SHOES THIS HIGH, the ENEMY and MARCHING GIRLS. It also gets into early 80's groups like NO TAG, the DUM DUM BOYS and DESPERATE MEASURES that showcase the influence of the Riot City (say) sound, and which also serves to highlight the exploding tensions between the skins and punks of the day. The 70s New Zealand stuff has already been frequently comp'd, so this is a totally essential purchase for both the unreleased tracks and its coverage of the frequently overlooked early/mid 80s punk scene. (RW)
(Raw Power)







V/A – "Not In Captivity" CD

A collection of 21 bands spanning a wide spectrum of styles. You got grindcore,'77 style punk, pop punk, indie rock, gearhead rock and loads more. I have to say not one track of the 21 jumped out at me. Of these bands, WIMPY DICKS is the only band I have ever heard of. If I had to pick one track it would be HARMONY CORRUPTION's "Christening". KLOUSE sounds like they may be fun to see live. A sampler this is—not sure of what—not much else to say about it. (RR)
(High Fidelity, PO Box 1071, Grover Beach, CA 93483)

V/A – "Punk Rock BRD, Die Amtliche History Von Punk In Deutschland" 3xLP

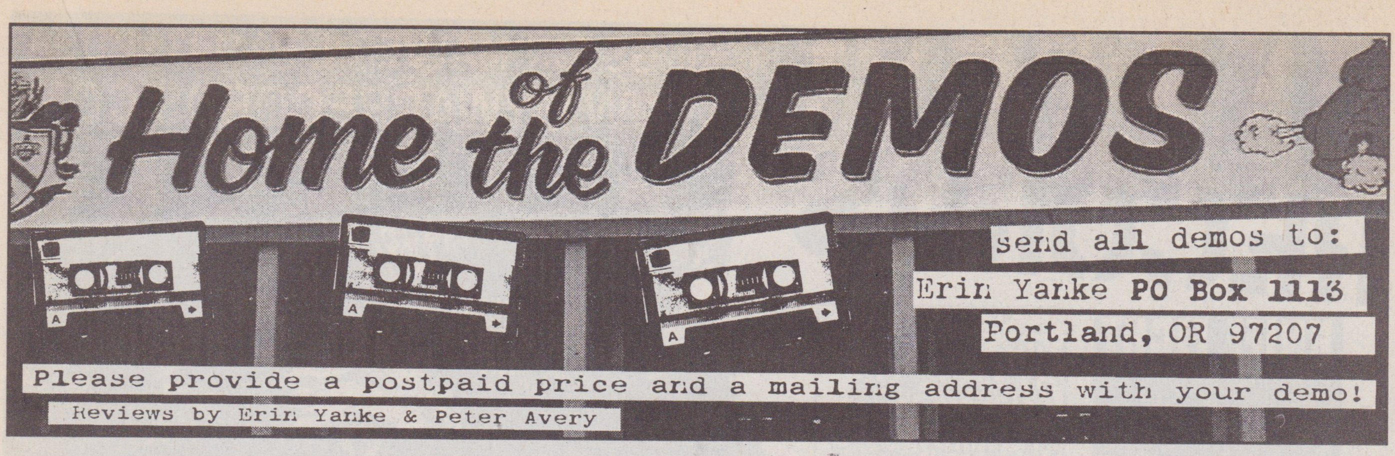
How do I even begin to review this? Really?! Three LPs combined with a massive booklet (in German only) detailing a nearly complete history of punk rock in Germany from 1977 to the present (though it does feel like the compilers where a bit more, shall we say selective, in their 90s selection—leaving out a good number of the more anarcho bands). I've been a fan of the classic German punk style for some time, with its fast paced attack, rousing anthemic choruses, and the gruff vocals that are near trademarks of the style. Nearly everyone of note is represented: TOXOPLASMA, OHL, BUTTOCKS, DIE TOTEN HOSEN, BLUT+EISEN, VORKRIEGSJUGEND, UPRIGHT CITIZENS, INFERNO, SPERMBIRDS, SLIME, EA80, and on and on… A great historical intro into the German punk scene brought to us once again by the great folks of Weird System. (MT)
(Weird System, Alstertwiete 32, 20099 Hamburg, GERMANY, www.weirdsystem.de)

V/A - "3 Way Split" CD

Retrospective of three early 80s Connecticut bands; TARGET CELLS, WHITE PIGS, and CHRONIC DISORDER, all delivering some pretty snotty hardcore. TARGET CELLS' only demo appears here with a full remastering job that makes it sound pretty decent—like a very rudimentary CIRCLE JERKS. WHITE PIGS had more vinyl success with their brash hardcore bursts, but sound like a million other one-single wonders from the 80s that labels like Mystic stockpiled...next. Finally the best of the lot (and most well-known, for sure) CHRONIC DISORDER, has a sound that would fit in snugly alongside early Alternative Tentacles releases, with its herky jerky PROLETARIAT-esque artsy punk complete with Jello wannabe vocals. A nice historic disc, if only for the CHRONIC DISORDER gear. (TB)
(Coldsweat, PO Box 352, Manly 2095, NSW, AUSTRALIA)

V/A – "Western Stars" CD

One of the great side effects of bootlegging old punk records is that band members begin to notice that people give a crap about their little band from 20-30 years ago, spotting references on Ye Olde Internet, and in turn contacting the lonely geeks who've cupped the guttering candle in their hands all this time. Eventually, you end up with these utilitarian devices: legit comps of obscure stuff that serve to remove the veils of collector-driven mystery and allow bands/records to stand on their own. This CD handles the blokes 'n lasses of Bristol, England, circa 1979-81, a scene that leaned heavily towards the weirdo-pop side of things, which is a pleasant change of pace from the guttural lo-fi stuff that usually graces these types of endeavors. Fans of post-punk are the target audience here, and SHOES FOR INDUSTRY, APARTMENT, VARIOUS ARTISTS and GLAXO BABIES do not disappoint. The *Hard Objects* EP by the ART OBJECTS from 1980 is one of the better art-freak out 7" of the period, good agro that compares to many big buck rarities. Only an awful track from the TALISMEN detracts from the package. This comp is also rather on the light side, since including only thirteen tracks means leaving off lots of b-sides. Oh well. Many of these records were on the local scene-making Fried Egg label, and if you find CDs "eh," some of the originals aren't *too* expensive to pick up…yet. (RW)
(Sugar Shack, UK)



ABANDON plays moody, slightly slow discordant hardcore. They sound a bit like ONE EYED GOD PROPHECY, during their driving parts mostly, but the comparison falls apart with the sense that ABANDON's darkness is not pure hissyfit anger. The vocals are mostly on the high register, although no breaking glass or screamo going on in the two-thirds shouting, one-third singing mix. A RUDIMENTARY PENI cover included, too. It's a powerful mix of doom and hope, a soundtrack to our times. ($3 ppd. 6 song cassette, lyrics included. PO Box 20243, Oakland, CA 94620.) (Erin)

ANGEL ON THE NOD AND THE PHANTASY DEFYLMENT plays some doom and gloom gothic mix of styles and instruments—accordion? Real drums? Anyway, layers of slow and trance inducing music topped with great moaning, moody vocals that cry so long and deep for understanding and home, but just ooze the never-ending loneliness. Creative and impressive. ($3 ppd. 60 minute cassette, I'm not sure how many "songs," with more of a manifesto than lyrics. 970 Geary St. #50, San Francisco, CA 94109.) (Erin)

THE ANXIETIES rock pretty hard, in the catchy three-chord party band kind of way. Mid-tempo to fast-paced, with vocals are of a tuneful, snotty singing style. They play pretty toned down (for them), straightforward cover songs by the ADVERTS and the BOYS. ($3 ppd. 7 song CD, no lyrics included. PO Box 40353, Eugene, OR 97404.) (Erin)

Sorry, **COMMON ENEMY**, your CD-R wouldn't read in my stereo. Better luck next time. (Erin)

C.A.B. plays chaotic melodic punk, equal parts SHOTWELL, and unwavering belief in the idea that making spontaneous music with your friends is the ultimate way of living, even if (especially if?) they're only in town for a day. The music is lo-fi, catchy; the vocals are like singing along to a song on the radio with everyone you know at a drunken party. (9 song cassette, no lyric sheet. 543 Assembly, Fayetteville, AR) (Erin)

DEATHCYCLE A.D. plays a slower, bobbing-your-head-along style of hardcore. The vocals are shouted and punctuate the music well. Mosh parts are included, too. Good work! (4 song CD, lyrics included. $2 ppd. 6 Manchester Dr., Bethpage, NY 11714.) (Erin)

DEATHLY FIGHTER plays metal laced hardcore, like with lots of guitar leads and wanking off. Tempos change from fast to slow, giving you a chance to mix up your dance steps. Also features a cowbell prominently. A growling rabid vocalist rounds it all out, with a good evil laugh that doesn't appear often enough. (2 song cassette, with lyrics. PO Box 06464, Columbus, OH 43206.) (Erin)

FEELIN FINE melts the traditions of wild thrash (and mosh parts too) with the vocals of a doomcore band. The "from hell" deep throat guy and the screaming thrasher belt it out on every song. Lots of samples, mostly from *Barfly* (the movie) and also of THE DEAD MILKMEN. The lo-fi sound quality works in their favor. ($3 ppd. 6 song cassette, lyrics included. 1284 N. Glenn, Fresno, CA 93728.) (Erin)

FESTA DESPERATO combines the elements of modern hardcore, including metal infusion and strong and clean production, with a fierce and busy bass sound that adds a unique level of depth to the rage. The vocals are pure 80s hardcore, shouted loud and angry. Quality stuff, here. (7 Song cassette, lyrics in Czech and English. Spacilova 11, 618 00 Brno, Czech Republic, ultima.ratio@seznam.cz) (Erin)

FLOATING CORPSES have a mix of good JOAN JETT style rockin out, with the power of THE MUDWIMMIN at their best. The mix of predominant catchiness with the variety of feeling in each song is so cool. Great deep sung vocals, with back ups that vary in cadence and tone. ($5 ppd. 7 song CD, no lyrics included. 970 Geary St. #50, San Francisco, CA 94109.) (Erin)

FRIDAY NIGHT YOUTH SERVICE mixes up danceable catchy punk moments with thrash and anger, and occasionally an out-of-nowhere change up to keep you on your toes. Screaming female vocals fucking rock or make your hair stand on end, depending on the mood. Varied and awesome. ($2 ppd. 8 song cassette, no lyrics included. 2706 Harvard Ave. E., Seattle, WA 98102.) (Erin)

HIGH ON CRIME plays powerful hardcore, with a pounding drummer and a really full guitar sound, with the vocals composed of yelling and sounds dark for the most part. The studio makes this band sound bigger than a two-piece. ($5 ppd. 9 song CD, lyrics included. 210 E. Garfield Ave., Milwaukee, WI 53212.) (Erin)

KNEE DEEP IN SHIT plays mostly about a minute long song bursts of full on thrash, composed of a driving rhythm section, and guitars that are full on, with power chords galore and not so much note-playing. The vocals are venomous shouting, and sounds like mostly one guy, but there are some duets, too. ($2 ppd. 34 song CD, no lyric sheet. 5726 Sussex Ct. Troy, MI 48098.) (Erin)

RAMPAGE has a treble filled metal guitar sound dominating the fast-paced mean hardcore going on. The vocals reflect the variety of screams you can get from one pair of vocal chords, with a lot of rancor coming out of the quick bursts of shouting. (Free! 9 song cassette, no lyric sheet. PO Box 37, Centerville, MA 02632.) (Erin)

REBEL STREETS has a lo-fi old New York punk sound to them, with a slow rock pace and some dynamic changes in the songs mixing things up (more than changing the pace). The vocals are most prominent in the mix, mostly shouted with a guttural snottiness to them. ($2 ppd. 2 song cassette, no lyrics included. PO Box 2675, Jamaica Plain, MA 02130.) (Erin)

SCUM OF THE EARTH plays loping buzzy guitar driven hardcore where the vocals are prominent, shouted, and easily understood. The guitar solos appear and are a focus when they do, but they're not all over the place. They plow over you with palpable anger, yes. ($2 ppd. 5 song cassette, lyric sheet. 5726 Sussex Ct. Troy, MI 48098.) (Erin)

SKATE KORPSE plays slower than most skate punk bands, but still has the catchy fast parts and the leady guitar bits that define this genre. The vocals are a cool combination of snotty and higher pitched sore-throat vocals, sung and shouted. They do play an instrumental, which I interpreted as a tip of the hat to ol' JFA. ($2 ppd. 5 song cassette, no lyrics. 11 Alger Dr., Rochester, NY 14624.) (Erin)

STOCKHOLM SYNDROME fits well into the modern ripping hardcore world. They plunge into each song, slowing down rarely, and don't stop except for short breaks where you can picture synchronized jumps, or punctuated fist throwing. Musically, though, they're guitar driven, with hard hitting drumming, and vocals that sound effected by distortion, but maybe that's natural screaming. Totally tight, totally rips. ($3 ppd. 10 song cassette, lyrics included. PO Box 1011, Burlingame, CA 94011.) (Erin)

STUNTDOUBLES is a well-produced band playing harder (like hard rock, not like metal) straightforward punk rock. They've got a singer who has a mix of styles, from singing all over the scale, to shouted parts. The back up vocals, which play a big part in almost al the songs, are shouted by a gang of guys going wo-wo-wo for the most part. (14 song CD, lyrics included. 980 Gillaspie Dr., Boulder, CO 80305.) (Erin)

THC stands for TURD HUNGRY CHRIST, but please just refer to them as THC on the envelope. Okay, with that out of the way, this band is loud, fast, and fun. Hearkens back to the hardcore of olde, with chaotic bursts of energy where you can't help but jump around on top of your friends, and all that. They are infected by metal riffs a little, but only in the intros and the mosh part. The vocals are gravelly, but still have some snotty singing mixing in. Really engaging, really good. ($2 ppd. 7 song cassette, lyrics included. PO Box 6023, Chattanooga, TN 37401.) (Erin)

VOLCANO VULTURE is a one-man band, sort of singer/songwriter style, although that style covers a lot of ground from catchy pop styles, to regular ol' rock songs to songs with lots of effects as their style. The drum machine sound always gets on my nerves, but maybe it won't get on yours. ($1 ppd. 6 song cassette, no lyrics included. 52 Strickland Lane, Ardmore, TN 38449.) (Erin)

THE WRONG BROTHERS have three tapes backed up for review. So, generally, if you get one of these tapes, you'll get lo-fi guitar driven rock, with vocals that are up front, and rough in the good rockin sense. You will also get the other side of the spectrum, acoustic stuff with a drum machine. ($2 ppd. each. About 10 songs a piece, with out lyrics. 52 Strickland Lane, Ardmore, TN 38449.) (Erin)

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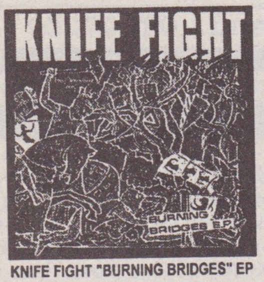
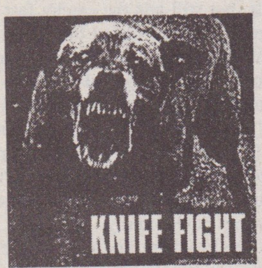
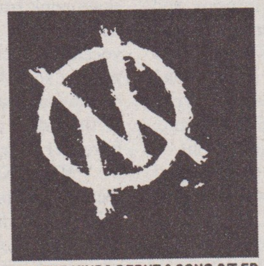


KNIFE FIGHT "BURNING BRIDGES" EP

BRAND NEW STREET TRASH SINGLE



KNIFE FIGHT DEBUT 11 SONG S/T EP


VIOLENT MINDS DEBUT 8 SONG S/T EP

LATER IN 2004 : STREET TRASH 12", FIT FOR ABUSE 12" EP
VIOLENT MINDS 12", AND MORE! HC RULES, O.K.!

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NEUROTIC SWINGERS "Artrats"-LP/CD

The NEUROTIC SWINGERS are impressive, they know how to write a hook. They sound like the HIVES hanging out with the BRIEFS flipping through old issues of Cream and Sniffin' Glue.(Maximum Rock & Roll)
Wow. Wow! Wow!!!! Holy hell, what's up with all these GREAT fucking French punk bands? The latest from the Neurotic Swingers is tearing up my stereo and reaffirming my belief in that thing called rock n' roll. 100 % killer punk rock.(Now Wave)

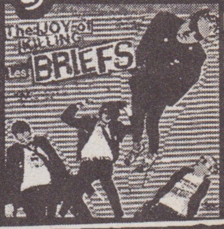
KEVIN K "Kiss of death"-LP/CD

Mr. K can play guitar and write a song better than any overhyped, flavor of the month pretty boy rockstar you care to name. Those of you who realize that the MUSIC is what really matters will want to put Kiss of Death near the top of your "albums to buy" list. (Now Wave)
Power pop! His raspy and soulful voice reminds me of the greater aspects of glam and bubble gum. He knows where the action is. He had the action right there in his hands and she slipped away, but he got a great record out of it. (Maximum Rock&Roll)

Split Single 7'
The DISTRACTION / The HATEPINKS

Super snotty 77 style NewWave Punk ! Two tracks each, nice cover as usual!! NNNaaaarghh... a killer 45!!!!!!" (Soundflat)
I cannot wait to hear more from both of these bands.This is a great, great, great, great, great, great, great fucking record. Buy it, punk! (Now Wave)

The BRIEFS
"The joy of killing"-Single 7'



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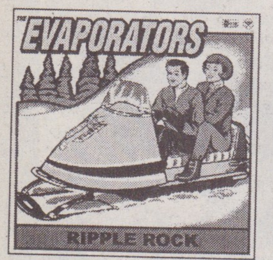

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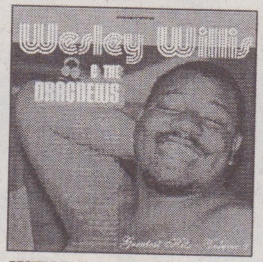

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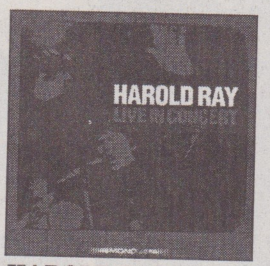

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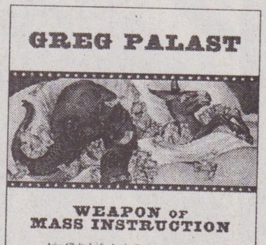

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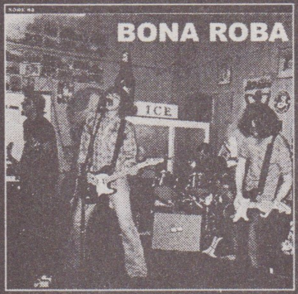

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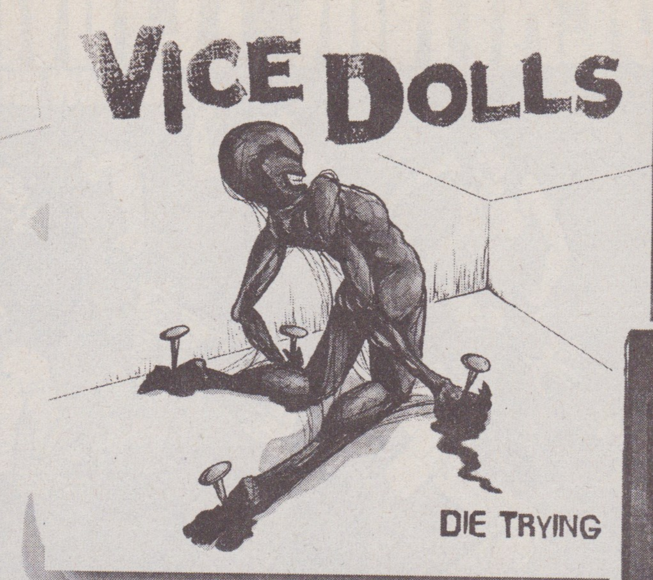

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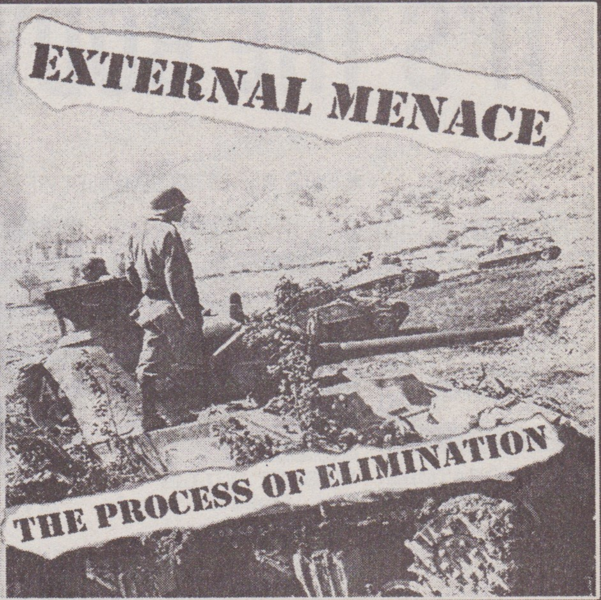

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ZINES

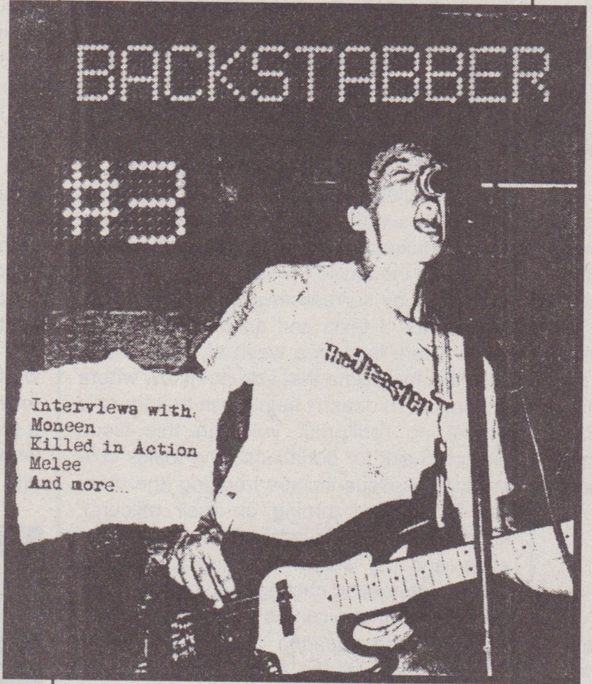
Reviews by: (AC) Arwen Curry, (AR) Aragorn, (JB) Julia Booz Ullrey, (MD) Mikel Delgado, (BD) Ben Ditch, (SD) Sara Double-Ears, (MF) Maree Faygo, (JH) Jeff Heermann, (HH) Harald Hartmann, (CJ) Chloe Jensen, (JM) Jeff Mason, (MN) Mimi Nguyen, (CR) Casey Ress, (MT) Mike Thorn, (GZ) Gordon Zola.

Please send your zine in for review. Write down any information you want included in the review; method of printing, number of pages, issue number and post paid price. If you want us to include a foreign post paid price, tell us. If you accept trades, tell us. The only information we will include is what you provide us.

AK INK #7 / $2?
7.5 x 8.5 - copied - 36 pgs
I know that Anchorage is a big city, but this has a kind of backwoods, small town feel to it. There are some record, show and beer reviews, the fake horoscopes (no!), an interview with a local "alternative" business owner, and perhaps best of all, a punk rock game similar to LIFE. I could really do without the back page, which proclaims, "Remember Kids, Vegetables are for Fags!" Grow up. (MD)
PO Box 244235 / Anchorage, AK 99504
www.akink.org

ANARCHY #56 / $4.95
8.5 x 11 - printed - 84 pgs
Two -isms I'm not partial to are primitivism and surrealism. Both are covered here. If you wanna hunt and gather in the woods, free as a beaver, fucking go for it already. Why you dither in society, critiquing other intellectuals, I don't know. I don't even understand what surrealism is about because I can never wade through the writing, but this article tries to connect the founders of the idea to anarchism. Also there's a piece about living with a cat. They should've put a cat on the cover, being pet by an anarchist—that'd sell better I think. I did glean a little knowledge or a broader perspective from some of the conference reports (the writers thankfully show a bit of humor), the piece on "summits and counter-summits," and the history of 19th century French eco-anarchists. The letters section brims with in-fighting. (JM)
C.A.L. Press / PO Box 1446 / Columbia, MO 65205-1446

BACKSTABBER #2 / $2
5.5 x 8.5 - copied - 32 pgs
First off, I really like the layout of this zine. Though it's mostly music-oriented, Derek also throws in some pretty decent personal articles and a list of all his favorite bands categorized by genre. He also includes some killer photos of bands such as Majority Rule, Pg. 99, Defacto Oppression, and many more. *Backstabber* is also jam-packed full of interviews with bands like Moneen, Killed in Action, Melee (Thrash Attack), and Run For Your Fucking Life. With this much content, you'd be a fool to not pick this up. (MF)
5035 Oakwood Dr / Pendleton, NY 14120



BIOSPHERE #34 / $3
6 x 8.25 - copied - 84 pgs - Czech
The focus is on European and Asian bands (primarily hardcore), so there's a refeshing break from US punk in these pages. Instead, in basic, classic punk-friendly copy shop style, you get interviews with S.I.K.A. (Subsictence in Kontra Attitude), Balowski Records, a Dutch thrash/HC label, Massick, from Germany, youth crew band Mad Rats, from Portugal, and more. The most salient feature of this dense rag is its focus on scene reports, fests, and other events. In this issue alone, the editors cover "Holidays in Slovenia/Croatia," the Sardinian scene, the Rouen scene, and a festival in the Czech Republic. A very nice, useful, and relevant piece of work from these diehards. (AC)
Tomás Bulánek / Brancská 3 / 85105 Bratislava / Slovakian Republic
Biosphere666@hotmail.com

BOXCUTTER #3 / $1
5.5 x 4.25 - copied - 28 pgs
This zine looked really good when I first flipped through it. Providence must have been shining on *Boxcutter* that day, because if I had flipped onto the poetry pages, this would have gone into the great zine recycling bins of *Maximumrocknroll*. Along with the (bad) poetry, is a review of "Kill Bill" that was either tongue-in-cheek or kind of dicey, a "debate" on the merits of violence or non-violence, and random rants on fascism on-line, shoplifting, and the style of Oakland. There's something good going on here, *Boxcutter* just needs to change its blade. Dump the poetry and get a little deeper with the rants. (CR)
boxcutter@lists.riseup.net

BRAINSCAN #20 / $?
4.25 x 5.5 - printed - 64 pgs
This zine is brilliant. This issue of *Brainscan* is a collection of short stories written by a woman by the name of Alex Wrekk. Mostly having to do with her life in Utah, these stories consist of friendship, love, and coffee shop crushes. Alex is hilarious, witty, and it really feels as though she didn't hold hold anything back in her writing. The only real criticism I can give is that the font was a little difficult to read, but the letter-pressed cover made up for it. I will definitely be on the lookout for other issues. (MF)
PO Box 14332 / Portland, OR 97293

CHAINBREAKER #3 / $2
7 x 8.5 - copied - 44 pgs
I love these contributor zines with themes, this one being all about bikes, (especially an issue that moves from cover to cover without the usual filler bits). Each page screams bicycles: short sweet odes to bicycles, great simple instructions on how to fix and tune up your bike, bike feminism, and the great drunken bike adventure. It has been a while since I've read such a positive and fun fanzine. And the guy at the Alameda County Courthouse who read it over my shoulder seemed to think so too. (SD)
Shelly / 621 Rendon St / New Orleans, LA 70119

CHAIRMAN OF THE BORED #16.5 / $3
8.5 x 11 - copied - 30 pgs
This is a really interesting zine that both speaks past me and to me. On the one hand, it is written by two prisoners and reflects

aspects of a harsh reality. There is a line drawing of an idealized woman (in one section) that both relies on clear sexist stereotypes while also portraying, with a palpable accuracy, a type of hunger that drew me to her face and not her abnormal breasts. On the other are personal stories too compelling to ignore. There is a "reflection" that is particularly compelling. This said, the tone throughout is lighter than the context would lead you to believe. There are lots of comics and in jokes scattered through this interesting project. (AR)
109 Arnold Ave / Cranston, RI 02905

CHUMPIRE #165 / 1 stamp or trade
3.75 x 8.5 - copied - 6 pgs
I've never really enjoyed this zine – there's just not much there. Little snippets of reviews and life reflections that don't really say much or go anywhere. (MD)
PO Box 27 / Annville, PA 17003-0027

THE CIA MAKES SCIENCE FICTION UNEXCITING #2 / $1.50
5 x 5 - printed - 32 pgs
In this installment, it is argued that AIDS was invented by the US government as germ warfare, but also that AIDS doesn't kill people. Plenty of nasty allegations are presented as facts, but the lack of documentation is a big disappointment. This is packed with "information," but there is only one footnote. A bibliography is included, and some of these books would make a much better start to this topic. But if you love a good conspiracy, and are less interested in reality, this is a fine read. (JM)
Valiant Death Records / 22543 James River Dr / Carrollton, VA 23314
www.valiantdeath.com

THE CITY INVADED BY RATS #1 / stamps
5.5 x 8.5 - copied - 8 pgs - Portuguese
This cut and paste mini-zine includes an interview with Brazilian skate rock band Grinders and several local zine and record reviews. Also includes positive DIY attitude. (AC)
Apdo 57 / 28700 SS de los Reyes / Madrid, Spain

COMIXVILLE #8 / one stamp
4.25 x 5.5 - copied - 28 pgs
Chances are if you're reading this review, you like reading reviews of little publications. By that logic it would stand to reason that you'd be interested in *Comixville*, a collection of independent comic reviews and listings. This issue also includes an interview with Ben from *Snakepit*. If you're looking for self-published comics, and you don't know where to start, send a stamp to these folks. (CR)
PO Box 697 / Portland, OR 97207

COMMUNICATING VESSELS #12 / $3
5.5 x 8.5 - copied - 56 pgs
I have been convinced. Over the past two years I have heard increasingly persuasive arguments to pay more attention to the surrealist tradition. I always thought it was really simple—they either became commies or gallery artists—but I now understand that is not the case. *Communicating Vessels* is inspired by surrealism and usually included reprints of texts and art from the movement. There is such a wash of new content from this magazine that I do not know where to hang on. It doesn't help much that there is almost no "editorial" voice in this issue except to ask for donations. The topics covered in this issue include fragging (the practice of soldiers turning on their officers), nationalism, the Spanish Civil War, alienation, and the war in Yugoslavia. There is also an interesting catalog/reading list on the back pages that give you some insight as to where *Communicating Vessel* is coming from. I agree with the author that "Letters of Insurgents" is one of the most important books for anyone to read. Highly recommended! (AR)
PO Box 1124 / Madison, WI 53701-1124

CRUCIAL SESSION #1 & #2 / free
5.5 x 8.5 - copied - 16 pgs each
Dude, it's total midwestern skate-zine enthusiasm, with photos, music reviews, and interviews with Mike V. and the Rats, Salba, and Animal Chin. In issue #1, Ryan documents his trip to some kind of cheese festival; I thought it was a joke until I saw the pictures. A little weird, but if you're down with all things skate, you'll be hella stoked on this, brude. (CJ)
PO Box 2603 / Madison, WI 53701-2603

T.H.E. D.I.E. Vol. 2 #3 / free?
11 x 17 - copied - 12 pgs.
Who reads this? I'm serious. I'm not trying to be mean. I can't quite place the intended audience. The opening article is a well-intentioned discussion of Emerson's "Self-Reliance" vs. Thoreau's "Self-Sufficiency". It reads like it belongs in some academic journal, of which I can't divulge the caliber. And then the rest of the publication is reruns of articles you probably found in the likes of your friendly local corporate newspaper. All sources cited. What gives? Oh yeah, and some possibly pretentious book recommendations and other zine reviews. (JB)
The Die / PO Box 764 / College Park, MD 20740

DREAM WHIP #13 / $4
4 x 5.5 - copied - 186 pgs
Dream Whip is like a long letter disguised as a fanzine—it has that kind of precious detail. I scrambled around for a while trying to find finding my bearings, as editor Bill floated around NYC, Chicago, and the South. The Chicago stories have a dreamy quality that made me skeptical, at first, but by the time we made it onto a cruise ship to Europe (he's afraid of flying), I was totally on the boat. The ship chapters are particularly strong, illustrated (like the whole zine) with ink sketches. Bill has a tendency to manipulate sentiments and stories toward universal understandings, rather than using them to distinguish us. In this (apologies all around, but it must be noted) he recollects *Cometbus*. Take, for example, this passage, where Bill discovers he has friends in common with his foreign hosts: "Suddenly, the world shrinks to nothing; no distance and no strangers; a whole world of wide-open bedrooms in old port towns...A world that seems closed up tight till it throws its doors open wide, and then you wonder why you spent all those years alone." It's a derivation, maybe, but not an imita-

tion—Bill's style is more lush and visual, less rhythmic. He is a well developed, uncommonly good writer who pulls at your emotional attention, catches it, and keeps it. (AC)
PO Box 53832 / Lubbock, TX 79453

DWELLING PORTABLY Dec. 2003 / $1
5.5 x 8 - copied - 16 pgs
I found the whole to be greater than the sum of parts, as they say. On one hand, this is a collection of tips on how to dwell portably (duh), and with no filler and smallish print (not too small), there is plenty of information. But even better is the undercurrent recognizing that wanting something different than regular society makes you a target for authoritarians and other jerks. It's great the way the editors and contributors give you practical advice and the feeling that just living a good "marginal" existence is a triumph, all in the same sentence. It certainly does more for anarchism in 16 pages than *Anarchy* does in 84. (JM)
PO Box 190-d / Philomath, OR 97370

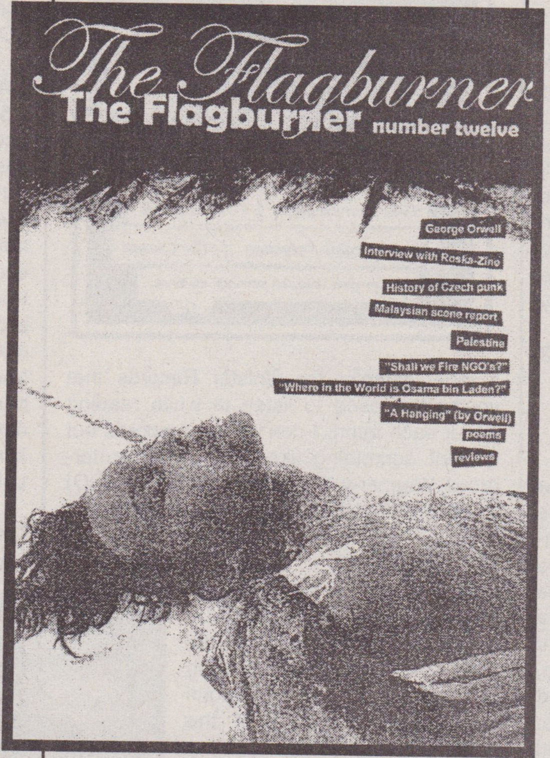
EARQUAKE #83 / $2
8 x 6 - copied - 24 pgs - French
Perhaps this is a small zine, but there is lots of punk inside its pages including interviews with the bands Trojan Horns and Ensign. The rest of the zine is all new record and zine reviews. A fun French read! (HH)
Frederic Leca / 55 rue St Jean / 88300 Neufchateau / France
earquake@hotmail.com

EVEN NOISY SPARROWS #1 / stamps
5.5 x 8.5 - copied - 12 pgs
A small simple zine made with passion and honesty. There is no pretension here. A high school kid from Miami writes about protesting, memories of middle school, and ten things he learned while walking home from school. As is often the case with zines, the difference between bad and good is a vast wasteland lurking between personality and lack of it. There is that spark of personality in *Even Noisy Sparrows.* (SD)
Robert / 2060 NE 209th St. / Miami, FL 33179

EVERYTHING FALLS APART #3 / $3 or trade
4.5 x 5.5 - copied - 24 pgs
Do they not have copiers in the UK? I don't know why computer zines make me cringe but I have this bad case of the willies just looking at this. Sigh. Interviews with dina and I EXCUSE and I think the editor left out a page when he was stapling, or else "ing" is the new "once upon a time" way to start rambling show reviews? Flash biggest hits: one-pager ways to trick Christians out of their clothes through bible recitation, and of course some funny reviews. (JB)
Will / PO Box 215 / Leeds / LS26 OWP / UK
Willfallsapart@hotmail.com

FAST FOR SPEED FREAKS #5 / ?
5 x 9 - printed - 74 pgs - Japanese
Another cool issue of this Japanese fanzine dedicated to out of control fastcore, and thrashing hardcore. This time around contains interviews (in Japanese) with Brody's Militia, Apocalyptic Raids, Holier Than Thou?, Municipal Waste, Nailbiter, DFA, Havoc Records and more—including news of the world of insane fastcore and record reviews. Top notch super professional print job and cool layout. (MT)
1088-1-20 Nozumachi / Machidashi / Tokyo 195-0063 / Japan

THE FLAGBURNER #12 / $3 or 2 euros
5.5 x 8.5 - copied - 32 pgs
As you might expect from the name, this is an anarchist punk zine. *Flagburner* is of the thoughtful and researched type rather than the bash-and-trash review of the scene. Articles about NGOs (we call 'em non-profits), the history of Czech punk, Palestine, and a mess of music and zine reviews. This issue is dedicated to George Orwell and there was a biography of him, which, curiously for an anarcho-zine, didn't get into the issue of his ratting out ex-comrades to English police agencies. Other than that omission, I liked this zine a lot. (GZ)
Janne Nystrom / Eurantie 12A9 / 00550 Helsinki, Finland



FREAK TENSION #9 / $1.50
5.5 x 8.5 - copied - 22 pgs
The last issue of *Freak Tension* I read contained, if I remember correctly, a story about a carnivorous alien eyeball. Issue #9 follows up with more of the same, delivering tales of evil puppets come to life, zombies of all sorts, and MC-battling frogs. Matthew's "concept record reviews" are totally hilarious, prompting the reader to imagine, for example, what the new Bouncing Souls record would have sounded like if they had recorded it with a dozen live monkeys inside the studio. Yeah, the fiction in here can get a little gross and outlandish at times, but the entertainment that *Freak Tension* provides is totally worth it. (CJ)
PO Box 22163 / Green Bay, WI 54305
freaktension@yahoo.com

GHOST PINE #7 / $2
4.5 x 5.5 - copied - 48 pgs
Using a somewhat linear timeline of summertime and isolation Jeff constructs a heart-warming nest-like tribute to his family. Now you know that family can be many people, not merely our blood lineage: parents and grandparents are in these stories, but also friends. There is folklore, history, and our current world all told through the eyes of a charming young man. It is a mini autobiography, very literary and engaging. (SD)
114 Canter Blvd / Nepean, Ontario / K2G-2M7 / Canada

GREENZINE #13 / $?
5.5 x 8.5 - copied - 62 pgs
This zine is a collection of stories written by a woman by the name of Cristy Road, who I met this fall and never really had the chance to talk to. This is the first issue of *Greenzine* I have read, but if she keeps putting it out, it won't be the last. I must say that Cristy is very talented on many levels. She is an amazing artist and a good storyteller. These qualities combined make this zine a ten. The stories are of personal content about growing up, friendship, and traveling. This is definitely worth checking out. (MF)
Cristy C Road c/o Greenzine / 14222 SW 83 St / Miami, FL 33183

KEEPSCHTUMM #8 / $3
5.5 x 8.5 - copied - 20 pgs
Keepschtumm is a political/punk zine from Wales. Half of the zine consists of articles having to do with world events and of the political nature. I'm not so into computer-produced zines, but most of the articles include computer drawn pictures that totally made me laugh. The other half of this zine consists of interviews with bands such as The Cravats, Combat Shock, My So-Called Band, and a few more. Pretty decent zine. Worth a buck, I don't think I'd pay three. (MF)
33 Henry Taylor St / Fflint / Ffintshrire / CHG 5PP / Wales, UK
Keepschtumm@msn.com

IN THE VAN #1
8.5 x 11 - printed - 92 pgs
This is an all-tour diary zine inspired by a copy of *Forced Exposure,* which was an 80s punk zine from Boston. All right, so I didn't have too much attachment to the bands featured in this zine, but I do like the idea of chronicling our culture for people to look back on 20 years from now the same way we can look at 70s zines like *Search and Destroy.* Bands include, but are not limited to, The Profits, Blanks 77, The Virus, and Suspect Device. These are for the most part

fairly entertaining accounts of the different tours of several Boston punk bands. Good overall layout and presentation. (BD)
FNS Publishing / PO Box 1299 / Boston, MA 02130

IN YOUR ROOM #8 / $2
4.5 x 5.5 -copied - 50 pgs
The Milkcrate Rustlers are at it again. This time Serene and Allison bring along roadie Sarah for the festivities. Tour starts in the Midwest then meanders down to the south. There is less wild than the last tour, and a bit more sick. These witty and short comics are a perfect pocket-sized bus read. (SD)
PO Box 1514 / Bellingham, WA 98227

IT'S ALL GRAVY #5 / free in LA, elsewhere 1 well-hidden dollar
4.5 x 5.5 - copied - 24 pgs
Can I get a fuck yeah? This slim volume contains just about everything a girl could ask for. This zine is chock full of enthusiasm and cuteness. They give instructions on how to set up a punk rock swap meet in your backyard, list upcoming shows, interview Kill Radio, and review shows aplenty. There is also a piece on the WTO protests in Cancun and a bunch of personal reflections on TV and childcare. My faith in humanity is renewed. Also included is a supplementary scene report! (JB)
Nickolai Garcia / c/o Libros Revolucion / 312 W 8th St / Los Angeles, CA 90014

I'VE GOT RABIES #1 / $1
8.5 x 11 - copied - 10 pgs
If you've read Ben's other zine (the metal/hardcore-obsessed *Voices Wake Us...*), you know the way he writes: academic, analytic, and detailed. It's comprehensive for sure, but can start to seem pretentious after a bit. *I've Got Rabies* is his attempt at a personal zine, detailing a winter break spent at home in Texas: he writes about his job, DSB, the new Lord of the Rings movie, and the reasoning behind an all-black wardrobe. There are lots of moments of humor, and even a few places where I laughed out loud, but I also found myself getting bogged down in the overt intellectuality (is that even a word?) of most of the stuff in here. That's not to say that all punk zines should be full of typos and run-on sentences, but I think there's a happy medium to be found, and this zine isn't quite there yet. The truth is, more often than not Ben ends up discounting the things he has to say with wordiness, convolution, and unshakable scholastic overtones—in the end, his manner of speaking kept me from really enjoying *I've Got Rabies*. (CJ)
5290 Lerner Hall / New York, NY 10027

JADED IN CHICAGO #15 / $2
8.5 x 11 - printed - 32 pgs
These glossy music magazines leave me with the urge to count how many advertisements make up the thin amount of pages (11 ads pages in this one). *Jaded in Chicago* is pretty in the typographic sense; fun fonts drive the band interviews and decent quality pictures round out each article. There is a readable chat with Bad Religion via bassist Jay Bentley, a few new Chicago band plugs, plus The Alkaline Trio, Duvall, and The Arrivals. Oh, and reviews. It also comes with a label sampler for Sinister Records that you're supposed to listen to while reading about each band. I don't review records but it went something like emo, emo, guttergrowl, Weezer-y, Christian indierockish. (SD)
PO Box 330 / Western Springs, IL 60558

LUCIDITY #3 / ?
5.5 x 8.5 - copied - 40 pgs
Lucidity has a good piece on being punk and working full-time, including arguing with purist punks against the "unions don't matter" mantra of the slumming middle class. Another article dealing with the death of a sister was also very good. As for the "poetry is punk" piece well...you can only say that if you're Patti Smith or John Cooper Clarke. People should also contact the author for the big bi-annual, international zine trade he organizes. (GZ)
Ed Hannon / Downings Cross / Prosperous / Naas / Co Kildare, Ireland

MAKE ME NUMB #14 / $1
4.25 x 2.75 - copied - 56 pgs
You should get this zine, OK? Sure, you should always be wary of little "personal" zines. They can just be collections of self-loathing and whining. *Make Me Numb* is a brutally honest recollection of growing up in a hard way. Andee shares life experiences in a brutally frank way without asking for unnecessary sympathy or condescension. The stories take us from her parents' divorce, her mom's fucked-up boyfriend, traveling, escaping, reconnecting with her brother, and the consequences of all of these intense experiences. Although the tiny type and the low light made my eyes ache, I read *Make Me Numb* from cover to cover, and you should too, all right? (CR)
309 N 6th Ave / Pensacola, FL 32501
xcrushslutx@hotmail.com

NEUS SUBJEX #58 / free
8.5 x 3.5 - copied - 1 pg
This is a one-page zine from Fairfield, OH, which has apparently been running for eight years! It has local news, short interviews with Crimson Sweet and The Sundresses, and one column, "Destined to Lose." Check it out punk! (BD)
PO Box 18051 / Fairfield, OH 45018

9 AND A HALF LEFT #9 / $1 or trade
4.5 x 5.5 - copied - 36 pgs
I could totally drink beers on the porch with this guy. A personal zine is not complete without self-consciousness conducive to exemplary learning. For example, I would never think to jump into a yuppie's car to escape a rabid dog in an alley, but how could I begrudge the act so sweetly told by a self-proclaimed "unshaven, tattooed, dirty clothes-wearing guy carrying a bottle of booze"? Hang on. This zine is *so* sweet. The parts where dude describes his kid Owen are not to be missed. (JB)
Mike Rodemann / 1353 Westlake Ave / Lakewood, OH 44107

OX #53 / $8
8 x 11 - printed - 164 pgs - German

As usual, this zine is a huge read, with enough punk for multiple trips to the WC. Included in this issue are interviews with Tim Green of the Fucking Champs, Lagwagon, Pretty Girls Make Graves, Havoc Records, Cool Jerks, Sons Of Cyrus, and many more bands. Also includes are lots of ads, and loads and loads of new record reviews. This is a definitive read for any punk rocker in Germany, or someone interested in that scene. Always great, and it comes with a free 31-song sampler! (HH)
PO Box 102225 / 42766 Haan / Germany
www.ox-fanzine.de

PAPING #9 / $5
4.5 x 5.5 -printed - 32 pgs
I can totally see this handmade comic all strewn out on the kitchen floor in mid-assembly, the artist covered in ink, as well as the floor and chairs, and every surface jammed

with paper in varying stages of dryness. The blue and white ink on orange construction paper is oh so pretty. John tells a simple story of his bicycle getting stolen and the search that ensues. Each page is a separate block print (?) Small children (John's students) with wild facial expressions help him try to find his bike. Does he? You'll have to buy it to find out. (SD)
John Mejias / PO Box 128 45 E 1st / New York, NY 10003

THE PUNK PARENT #1 / stamps or trade
5.5 x 8.5 - copied - 10 pgs
There definitely seem to be a whole slew of parent zines these days, but this one's by a daddy. After reading this I have to say I'm not sure what's so "punk" about "The Punk Parent." I know that because I'm writing for *MRR*, people might assume I'm copping some purist punk attitude, but I'm not. I just mean that this isn't a zine filled with alternative parenting and dumpstering tips. Gabriel writes in a likeable voice about being pro-argument and non-violent, and reviews movies and books. In the next issue he promises to write about his Christianity. The handwriting made parts of this hard to read—consider yourself warned. (GZ)
Gabriel / 1925 1/2 7th Ave / Greeley, CO 80631
Fiveacrosstheface@hotmail.com

QUICKDUMMIES #16 / $4
8.5 x 11 - printed - 96 pgs
I remember the last time I reviewed this zine it was a total travesty, full of confused rambling and non-sequiters. This issue (commemorating the tenth year!) is a lot better: the tangents are kept to a minimum, and a lot of the content is actually pretty interesting. A European tour diary from Out Cold and an article on vivisection stand out as my favorites, but there are also interviews with Deranged Records, Garuda, The Virus, and tons more. On the whole, it's pretty good... And don't worry, the threat of "Final Issue" on the cover is only a joke. (CJ)
6810 Bellaire Dr / New Orleans, LA 70124
QDZine@yahoo.com

RAUMSCHIFF WUCHERPREIS #13 / $3
11 x 8 - printed - 56 pgs - German
This zine is mostly record reviews and a catalogue with lots of ads. There is an interview with the band Berliner Weisse, and a short article on two other bands. This zine is total punk rock in the scumfuck tradition. Great cover photo, and I hope the dude in it is still alive! (HH)
Postfach 100709 / 46527 Dinslaken / Germany
www.scumfuck.de

RAZORCAKE #18 / $3
8.5 x 11.5 - printed - 108 pgs
The Good: Interviews with No Idea Records, Fly (of PEOPS fame), the Bar Feeders, Sweet J.A.P. , the Weirdos, and Nicole Panter; lots of "honest" record reviews, Snakepit comics, and tons of ads. The Bad: Three of my least favorite writers, Rev Norb, Nardwuar, and Rich Mackin. The Ugly: They support Rich Mackin, need I say more? (MD)
PO Box 42129 / Los Angeles, CA 90042
www.razorcake.com

READ MAGAZINE #23 / $3
8.5 x 11 - printed - 100 pgs
"Literature for the punk dork" is the slogan of *Read Magazine*. Um, this is not literature. And if by calling it literature the editors are insinuating that band interviews, reviews, and fluffy toilet-length articles are the "punk" version of literature, then I protest. While reading *Read* I'm reminded of other mix and match magazines held loosely together by themes each issue, magazines with better writing and less played-out themes, such as *Roctober* and *Cool Beans*. And one other complaint—most of the book reviews are done by one single person; come on, you must have a friend or two who knows how to read, *Read*. (SD)
Adam Liebling / Read Magazine / PO Box 3437 / Astoria, NY 11103

REASON TO BELIEVE # 10 / free
8.5 x 11 - printed - 68 pgs
This kind of strikes me as a British *MRR*, complete with band interviews, extensive European scene reports, book and zine reviews, and a tablespoon of politics. Points of interest for me were a long letter from Oi Polloi about some German punks' apparent misinterpretation of the current Israel / Palestine situation, and an interview with a squatter about Ungdomshuset, a long time squat in Copenhagen, Denmark. Band interviews include Knifed and Project Hopeless. There are also tour diaries from Vialkas' tour in China and FxPxO and Threat of Riots' European tour. (BD)
145-149 Cardigan Rd / Leeds / LS6 1LJ / UK

ROUND THINGS ROLL #3 / **IN YOUR ROOM** #7 / $2
7 x 8.5 - copied - 16 pgs
The tour diary can be a bit hard to digest, what with that tiny print and the long days of nothing... but not this one. Join Serene and Allison and their band The Milkcrate Rustlers on a tour of the Midwest and south. Along for the ride is friend and roadie Sparky. Through comic and short narrative these girls drink their way from one state to another. (SD)
204 Miller / Fayetteville, AR 72703

SHADOW PLAY #6 / 20p
5.5 x 8.5 - copied - 12 pgs
This covered a lot of music that doesn't really fall under *MRR*'s scope...mostly reviews and 2003 Top 10s. It also has an interview with Buck 65. (MD)
Shadow Play / 28 Warwick Rd / Mapperly Park, Nottingham / NG3 5ES / England
alexowl26@hotmail.com

SPEAK FOR YOURSELF #1 / $4
8.5 x 11 - copied - 36 pgs
Generic hardcore fanzines are a (not-so-) guilty pleasure of mine. This one won me over with the character which comes through in the fest reviews. So many show reviews are duller than mosh-style hc, but these capture some fun. Some will be stoked on the high-quality photos, or the Midwest pride (the editor, on the content: "I can't afford to be picky, this is St. Louis.") There are a bunch of interviews—Knife Fight, Any Last Words, Outbreak, etc.—but they're nothing special. By looking carefully at the crowd shots, I was able to spy maybe five women, but otherwise this is boys, boys, boys. There are more women than people who aren't white—I think half of the minorities in here are in the Madball promo photo. And they desperately need a copy connection, because four dollars is way more than I would pay for this. This shit aside, I liked it, and I think you know if this is your scene or not. (JM)
7729 Ravensridge #A-1 / Shrewsbury, MO 63119

TOINEN VAIHTOEHTO #169 / $3
6 x 8 - printed - 28 pgs - Finnish
Au usual, this zine contains hardcore punk from Finland. Included in this issue are interviews with the bands Disfear and Otto

Itkonen. There are reviews of records, zines, shows, and books. There is also an article on an anarchist distributor, and a protest to free the Salonika Seven. (HH)
PL 1 / 65200 Vaasa / Finland
jantsa@yahoo.com

TOWN OF HARDCORE #7 / $1
8.5 x 11 - copied - 24 pgs
So this is a fairly dudely music based fanzine focusing on east coast hardcore. Though it could do with a little more variety, it is very well done for what it is. Clear and strong layout, in-depth articles and interviews, and a lot of pictures of sweaty tattooed dudes feelin' it. Read about Cro Mags, Internal Affairs, and The Prowl, plus a little tribute to *Sold Out*, an old 80s fanzine. This zine, by the way, is totally DIY, photocopied with very few ads. (BD)
1458 Reynolds Ave / Burlington / Ontario / L7M 3B7 / Canada

TURNING THE TIDE Vol. 16 No. 4 / $2
11 x 17 - printed - 16 pgs
The tireless work that is done in producing this magazine is pivotal to the greater political scene. I have always appreciated *Turning The Tide* and used it as a resource when I lived in a town where white power skinheads dared show themselves in public. This issue covers the gamut of topics you would expect from *Turning The Tide*. The deception of the Iraq war, the politics of Pacifica, and stories of LA community gardens, and the struggle in West Papua are examples. There is also a disturbing article on the band Death in June. Death in June is part of a genre of music called darkwave that could best be described as a combination of goth aesthetic and musical sensibilities with Dead Can Dance. Kettledrums, dark themes, and heavy anthemic chanting-as-singing typify the genre. Death in June, as with many bands of this genre, flirt with fascist themes and imagery which resulted in their attempts to play Chicago being disrupted and *Turning The Tide* trumpets (as a news report from ARA skins) this event. There is a large exposition of the alleged crimes of Death in June that is apparently enough to cover any violence toward them. While the band Death in June doesn't particularly matter to me (I prefer Dark Sanctuary and Switchblade Symphony in the genre), being reminded of what is oppressive about the power chord (or the kettledrum) is worth noting and responding to. It is good to see that it is still possible to shock some elements of the rock world. (AR)
PART - PO Box 1055 / Culver City, CA 90232

UNDER THE VOLCANO #77 / $3.95
8.5 x 11 - printed - 52 pgs
Mr. Black keeps cranking them out—this time *Under The Volcano* features interviews with From Autumn To Ashes, Between The Buried And Me, New Day Rising records, Nora, plus the Scraps And Heart Attacks. It's fairly well done and if you can get past the sorta bland layouts the interviews are okay—but really that layout is just too bland. (MT)
PO Box 236 / Nesconset, NY 11767

UP MAGAZINE #13 / $8
8 x 11 - Printed - 60 pgs - Dutch
With the declining value of the dollar, expect euro export records and zines too cost a lot more. Nevertheless, buying a good zine with a free 18-song CD is more than worth the price of admission. Included in this issue of *Up* are interviews with the Distillers, Gluecifer, De Heideroosjes, Anti-Flag, the Bronx, Melissa Auf Der Mauer, and many others. The zine also comes with lots of cool record and zine reviews, plus lots of ads. Great cover photo! (HH)
Postbus 4269 / 5604 EG Eindhoven / Netherlands
www.upmagazine.nl

WARNING #1 / $3
8.5 x 11 - printed - 28 pgs
From the mind that brought you *R'yleh Rising*, comes *Warning*—same basic focus on raw, black clad, charged hardcore punk, but without the H.P. Lovecraft bits. Tons of white on black text, blown out, high contrasted graphics form the foundation for interesting interviews with Blood Spit Nights, Kontatto, a reprint of an interview with The Wretched, and a surprisingly fascinating discussion with Discharge's tour manager from their ill fated *Grave New World* tour. Plus short features on PDX punx Assassinate, Religious War, Bomb Heaven, Ausgetbombt, and plenty of cloak and dagger politics. A totally great, totally über-punk looking cut'n'-paste layout that makes this look really fantastic—giving *Warning* a really distinctive personality. Great! (MT)
PO Box 40113 / Portland, OR 97240-0113

WATERINTOBEER #7 / $2?
5.5 x 8.5 - copied - 64 pgs
This is your basic punk zine, filled with interviews with Jello Biafra, Hero Dishonest, and The New Lev Yashin. It has reviews, some playlists, and a "political" back cover. While I would like to believe that I am not easily disturbed, the front cover of this zine is one of the most puzzling things I have ever seen. It is an ink line drawing of a horse "taking" (if you know what I mean) the Queen of England from behind. Furthermore the Queen has a voice bubble saying, "How else was Charles conceived?" I understand the desire to shock our sensibilities or to take the queen down a notch but the combination of these, as done here, has me scratching my head. Is the artist actually saying that Charles is a half-horse, half-human genetic miracle? The queen is actually wearing a crown and is fairly rotund (and drawn with some precision)—does the artist have a bit of a fetish that involves the veneer of royalty and bestiality? Puzzling. (AR)
Tim Livesey / 48 West Park Grove / Leeds / LS8 2DY / UK

WONKAVISION #23 / $2.95 US / $4.95 Canada
8.5 x 11 - printed - A lot of pages. Too many for me to count.
"Hardcore"-oriented punk mag that looks similar to the zine you're holding except with better printing, a glossy cover, and (mostly) bigger type. This issue asks many HC heavy hitters what they think of the current state of hardcore. For the life of me, I can't figure out what they're talking about. I don't think they're actually saying anything, but I can't be 100% sure. (That's one of the reasons this is my last zine review for *MRR*.) Lots of local Philly coverage and reviews of music fests (Hellfest, Posi-Fest, etc), band interviews, and reviews. This all seems pretty well done and well produced. (GZ)
PO Box 63642 / Philadelphia, PA 19147
www.wonkavisionmagazine.com

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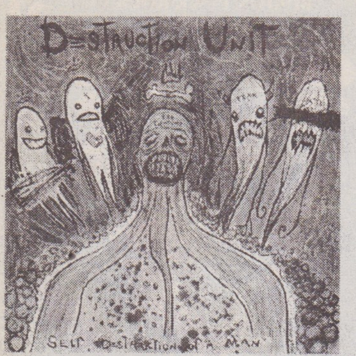

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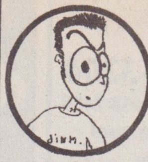

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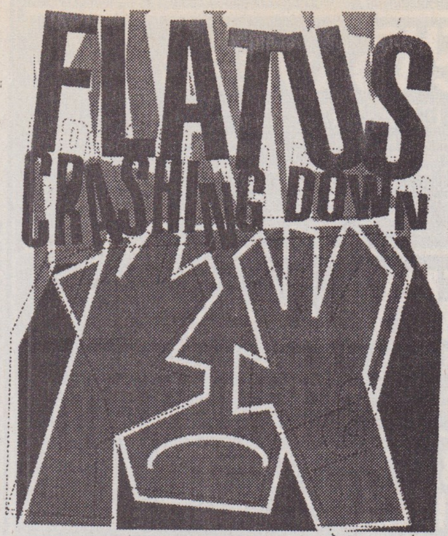

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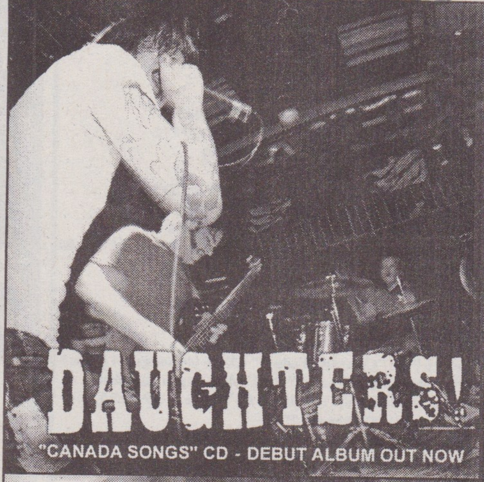

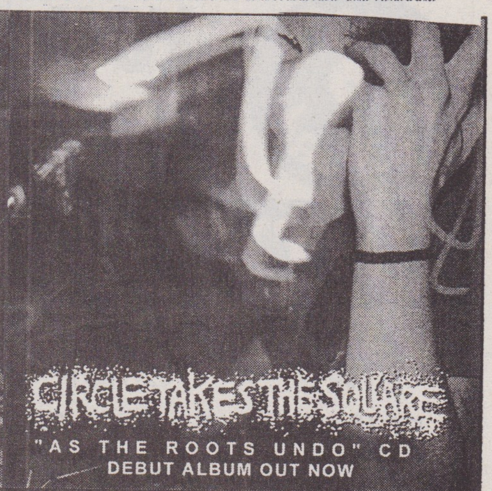

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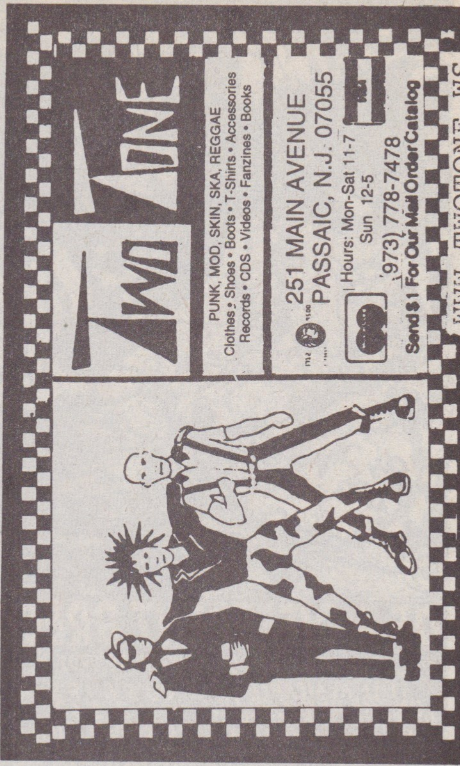

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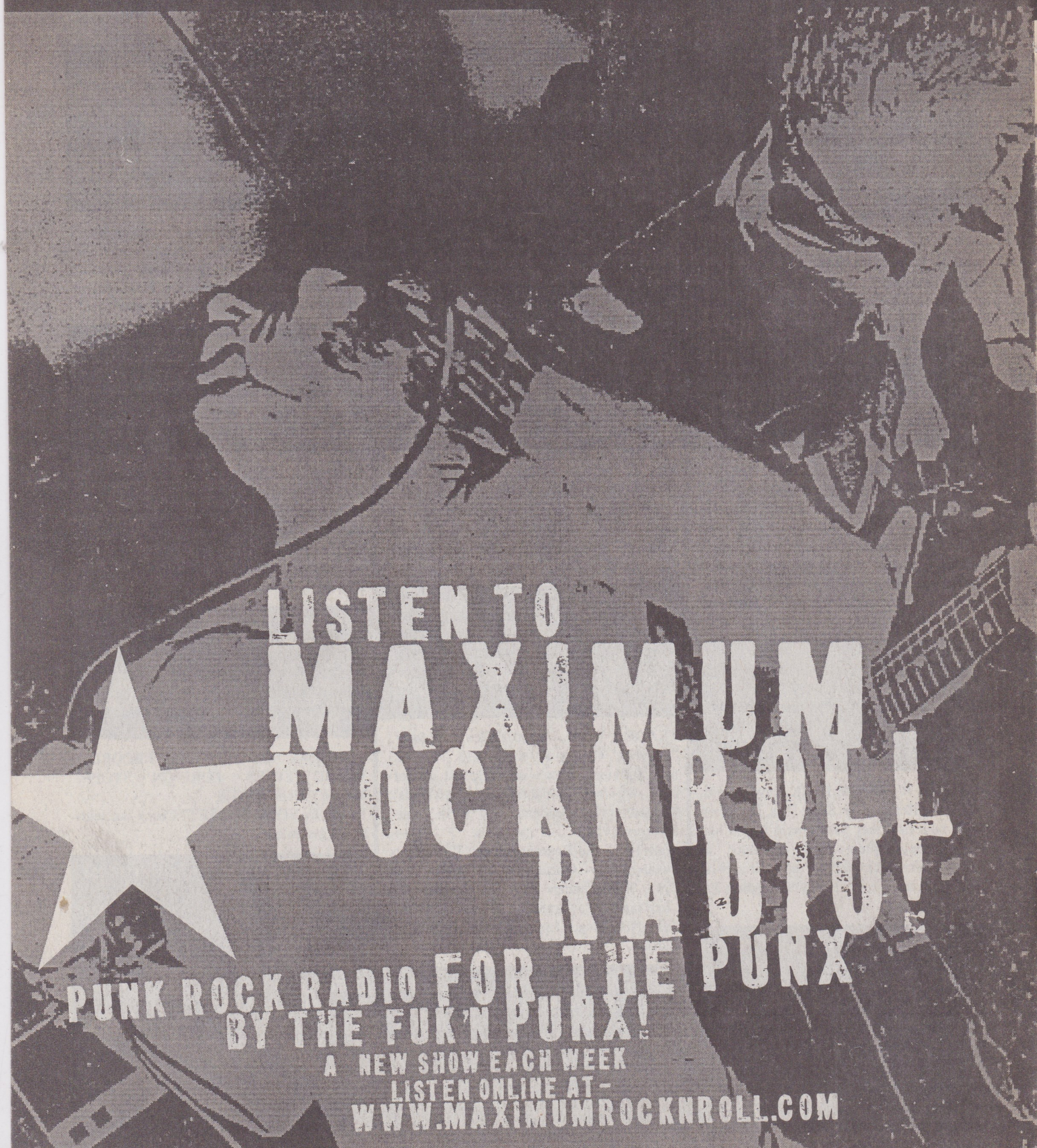
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